VISIT…

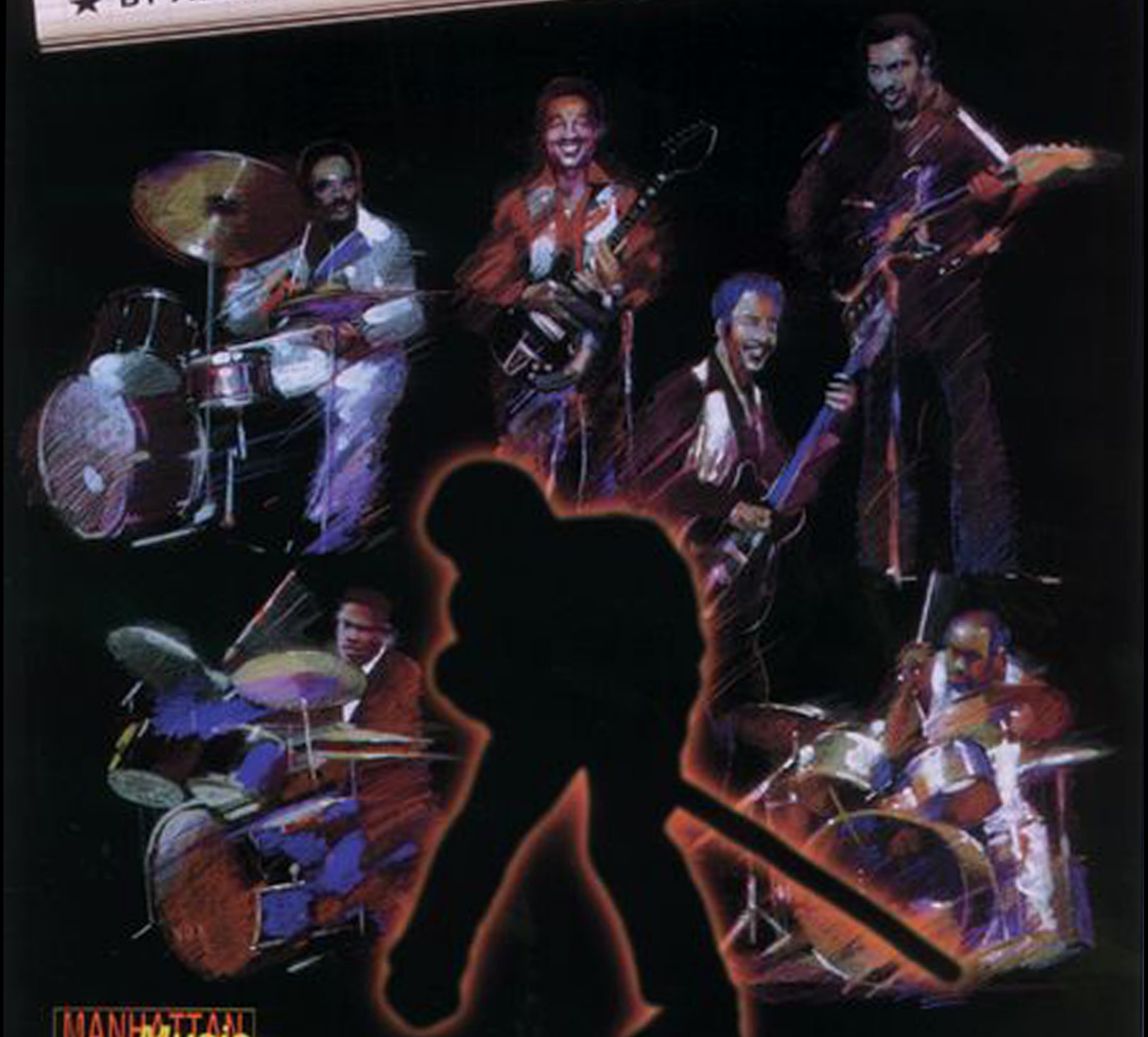
LANZAROTE Caliente.COM

THE FUNKMASTERS

THE GREAT JAMES BROWN RHYTHM SECTIONS ★ 1960–1973

2 CDs INCLUDED

★ BY ALLAN "DR. LICKS" SLUTSKY AND CHUCK SILVERMAN ★



MANHATTAN Music

FOR GUITAR, BASS, AND DRUMS

the text

Text written by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky
Edited by Paul Siegel and Harry Weinger
Research by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky and Chuck Silverman
Historical consultants: Harry Weinger and Alan Leeds

the transcriptions

Drum transcriptions by Chuck Silverman
Bass and Guitar transcriptions by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky (with an assist from Steve Beskrone on bass fingerings)

the CDs

CD's produced by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky
Drum tracks played by Chuck Silverman
Bass tracks played by Steve Beskrone
Additional bass tracks played by Jimmy Williams
Guitar tracks played by Allan "Dr. Licks" Slutsky

recording credits

Recorded at Benson Studios in Cherry Hill, NJ and Tom Parham Audio in La Habra, CA by Keith Benson, Carl Angstadt, and Tom Parham
Digital editing by Ted Greenberg and Chris Zurzolo at Big Zone Recording in Conshohocken, PA
Mastering and general studio sorcery by Ted Greenberg at Big Zone Recording

book/CD production

Edited by Dan Thress
Music engraving and page composition by Chelsea Music Engraving, NYC
Cover portraits by Alexander Kanevsky
Cover design by Hemmann Design
CD mastering by Frank Pekoc at Joe Lopes Music Mastering, L.I.C., NY

Additional thanks to the following literary resources: Adam White and Fred Bronson's *Billboard Book of Number One Rhythm & Blues Hits*, Peter Guralnick's *Sweet Soul Music*, Gerri Hirshey's *Nowhere To Run*, and, of course, James Brown's autobiography *James Brown: The Godfather of Soul.* ◆

instrument credits and special thanks

Chuck Silverman plays Zildjian cymbals, Legend drums, and Zildjian sticks. Allan Slutsky plays a '65 Fender Stratocaster with Joe Barden pickups and a stock 1965 Gibson ES 335.

Chuck Silverman would like to thank: Legend Drums for the killer snare, Joe Alessandro for the bass drum, his wife Kristen for the artwork, Grove School of Music, Musician's Institute, Drum Tech, Drummers Collective, John Pena, Jon Pintoff, Benoit Grey, Jerry Watts, Will Lee and the other great bassists with whom he's had the privilege of playing the music of James Brown, and a special debt of gratitude to "Jab'o," Clyde, and Melvin.

The authors gratefully acknowledge and thank Timothy Emmons of USC Jazz Studies, whose bass transcriptions and recorded performances formed the basis for the bass lessons in this book.

Allan Slutsky would like to thank: Jim Roberts of *Bass Player* magazine for his ecouragement and support, Ron Jennings for his friendship and inspirational musicianship, Steve Beskrone for "The Tone," Keith and Jimmy for the entertainment, a special thanks to the Uptown Theater, the Philadelphia Arena, and the Cadillac Club, which provided the setting for experiencing the music of James Brown firsthand, to the Majestics for teaching a fourteen-year-old Jimmy Nolen wannabe how to play "Licking Stick," "I Can't Stand Myself," and "Black and I'm Proud," and to Dave Marsh, Adam White, David Ritz, Nelson George, Greil Marcus, Chris Jisi, David Hinckley, Tom Moon, J. D. Considine, Susan Whitall, Fred Goodman, and Gerri Hirshey for providing a level of writing excellence to strive for. ◆

research acknowledgments

You can interview James Brown veterans from now 'til doomsday and it's doubtful you'll get any new information. You might get them to tell an anecdote in a different way but it's still the same old story. That's because Alan Leeds and Harry Weinger have spent the better part of the last two decades exhaustively researching everything there is to know about James Brown and his musicians. Continually besieged by authors, music historians, magazine editors and beat writers, the path from just about every piece of text on the subject eventually leads back to Alan and Harry. The sum of their tireless efforts in this field reached its culmination in 1991 with the release of the Grammy Award winning *Star Time*, a four-CD box set that is the definitive chronicle of the Godfather's recording career. (It also contains 20 of the 23 songs featured in this book.) If Alan and Harry had never come along, this book might not have been possible, or at the very least, would have taken another two years to be worthy of publication.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	CD TRACKING	4
	PROLOGUE	5
	HOW TO USE THIS BOOK	6
	LEGEND OF MUSICAL SYMBOLS	8
	HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE EARLY YEARS	9
1	THINK	11
2	I DON'T MIND	16
3	OUT OF SIGHT	21
4	PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG, PT. 1	26
5	I GOT YOU (I FEEL GOOD)	31
6	DON'T BE A DROPOUT	36
7	COLD SWEAT, PT. 1	39
8	I CAN'T STAND MYSELF (WHEN YOU TOUCH ME), PT. 1	47
9	I GOT THE FEELIN'	50
10	LICKING STICK–LICKING STICK	55
11	GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (STUDIO VERSION)	58
12	MOTHER POPCORN	65
13	FUNKY DRUMMER	71
14	GET UP (I FEEL LIKE BEING A) SEX MACHINE	78
15	GOT TO GETCHA	85
16	FUNKY WOMEN	92
17	SUPER BAD, PTS. 1 & 2	97
18	TALKIN' LOUD & SAYIN' NOTHING	104
19	GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (SIMULATED LIVE VERSION)	112
20	HOT PANTS, PT. 1	118
21	MAKE IT FUNKY, PT. 1	123
22	PAPA DON'T TAKE NO MESS, PT. 1	129
23	THE PAYBACK	134
	EPILOGUE	140
	DISCOGRAPHY	141
	INDEX	142

CD TRACKING

CD ONE	Track #
"JAB'O" STARKS' INTRO SPEECH	1
THINK	
Master Score Performance	2
Drum Lesson	3
Bass Lesson	4
Guitar Lesson	5
I DON'T MIND	
Master Score Performance	6
Drum Lesson	7
Bass Lesson	8
Guitar Lesson	9
OUT OF SIGHT	
Master Score Performance	10
Drum Lesson	11
Bass Lesson	12
Guitar Lesson	13
PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG, PT.1	
Master Score Performance	14
Drum Lesson	15
Bass Lesson	16
Guitar Lesson	17
I GOT YOU (I FEEL GOOD)	
Master Score Performance	18
Drum Lesson	19
Bass Lesson	20
Guitar Lesson	21
DON'T BE A DROPOUT	
Master Score Performance	22
Drum Lesson	23
Bass Lesson	24
Guitar Lesson	25
COLD SWEAT	
Master Score Performance	26
Drum Lesson	27
Bass Lesson	28
Guitar Lesson	29
I CAN'T STAND MYSELF (WHEN YOU TOUCH ME) PT.1	
Master Score Performance	30
Drum Lesson	31
Bass Lesson	32
Guitar Lesson	33
I GOT THE FEELIN'	
Master Score Performance	34
Drum Lesson	35
Bass Lesson	36
Guitar Lesson	37
LICKING STICK–LICKING STICK	
Master Score Performance	38
Drum Lesson	39
Bass Lesson	40
Guitar Lesson	41
GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (Studio)	
Master Score Performance	42
Drum Lesson	43
Bass Lesson	44
Guitar Lesson	45
MOTHER POPCORN	
Master Score Performance	46
Drum Lesson	47
Bass Lesson	48
Guitar Lesson	49

CD TWO	Track #
FUNKY DRUMMER	
Master Score Performance	1
Drum Lesson	2
Bass Lesson	3
Guitar Lesson	4
GET UP (I FEEL LIKE BEING A) SEX MACHINE	
Master Score Performance	5
Drum Lesson	6
Bass Lesson	7
Guitar Lesson	8
GOT TO GETCHA	
Master Score Performance	9
Drum Lesson	10
Bass Lesson	11
Guitar Lesson	12
FUNKY WOMEN	
Master Score Performance	13
Drum Lesson	14
Bass Lesson	15
Guitar Lesson	16
SUPER BAD, PTS. 1 & 2	
Master Score Performance	17
Drum Lesson	18
Bass Lesson	19
Guitar Lesson	20
TALKIN' LOUD & SAYIN' NOTHING	
Master Score Performance	21
Drum Lesson	22
Bass Lesson	23
Guitar Lesson	24
GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (Live)	
Master Score Performance	25
Drum Lesson	26
Bass Lesson	27
Guitar Lesson	28
HOT PANTS, PT.1	
Master Score Performance	29
Drum Lesson	30
Bass Lesson	31
Guitar Lesson	32
MAKE IT FUNKY, PT.1	
Master Score Performance	33
Drum Lesson	34
Bass Lesson	35
Guitar Lesson	36
PAPA DON'T TAKE NO MESS, PT.1	
Master Score Performance	37
Drum Lesson	38
Bass Lesson	39
Guitar Lesson	40
THE PAYBACK	
Master Score Performance	41
Drum Lesson	42
Bass Lesson	43
Guitar Lesson	44

PROLOGUE

Maybe it was the way the stage lights cascaded off the shimmering, metallic gloss of their maroon tuxedo jackets. Perhaps it was the deft precision of their steps and the slick way the horn section players swung their instruments as if they were one person. Or maybe it was because I was the type of guy who knew every guitar lick the Beatles and Stones ever played but didn't know one lyric. I mean, here I was in 1967 at Philadelphia's mecca of soul music, the Uptown theater, watching the James Brown show. The "hardest working man in show business" is center stage, drenched in sweat—one moment gyrating and spinning like a Tasmanian devil, and in the next, down on his knees, baring his soul and pleading with the gods of R&B to rescue him from his emotional torment. As he reaches deep down to punctuate a vocal line with that signifyin' primal scream of his, a delirious legion of female devotees is instantly reduced into a helpless chorus of wails and moans. It's a riveting spectacle. It's compelling beyond all comprehension. *So what the hell am I doing watching the band?*

I wasn't crazy. I knew my vindication would come someday, and it eventually did two decades later. The band I saw that night in 1967 could have made a cadaver climb off a slab in a city morgue to do "The Jerk." As the '90s approached, a whole new generation of funksters was also coming to that same conclusion, as the James Brown rhythm section of the '60s and early '70s became the most sampled and copied group of musicians in the history of R&B. Yet, in spite of new audiences and the increased worldwide attention, the mention of names like Odum, Parker, Nolen, Kellum, Starks, Collins, and Stubblefield still usually elicits blank stares.

The mission of this book is to help rectify that situation, as we temporarily move the spotlight off of James Brown and attach some names, faces, and notes to the co-creators of his remarkable, ground-breaking grooves. "Co-creators" is the operative word here. James Brown's recent autobiography paints his sidemen as great musicians who—regardless of their contributions—were replaceable cogs in his funk machine. The rebuttal of these same sidemen graciously points to Brown as the prime mover and shaker, while nevertheless, offering story after story of humoring him in the studio while still playing their own original concepts and ideas.

The debate rages on, but it isn't as acrimonious as it would appear to be. Of all the veterans of the James Brown funk wars interviewed for this book, not one showed any signs of lingering resentment for their ex-boss. The much publicized musicians' animosity over lack of musical credit, poor wages, and disciplinary tactics has long been downgraded to a state of benevolent resignation. "That was just James being James," I was told over and over.

A 1970 band mutiny supplied the required litmus test to shed light on the dispute. Take James Brown out of the creative process and you get songs like "Got To Getcha" and "Funky Women"—hip, irresistible tracks that proved the musicians had something to say all by themselves. But do they have the earth-shattering impact of "I Got You" and "Funky Drummer"? I don't think so. Similarly, take Brown's personal rhythm section out of the musical equation, replace them with generic studio musicians, and you wind up with "Prisoner of Love" and "Ain't That A Groove"—classic performances without a doubt, but they're not "Cold Sweat" or "Sex Machine." The answer that is often so apparent to the impartial observer is just as often completely unrecognizable to the participants. Like it or not, the Godfather and his band are joined at the hip in an eternal synergistic relationship.

So what's so special about these back-up musicians that they merit their own book, and why should you expend such a considerable outlay of your time and attention in order to study and understand their life's work? Just look at their disciples and you'll get your answer: Prince and George Clinton revere these musicians above all other musical influences; Earth, Wind, and Fire's funkified pop would have sounded like the Brady Bunch had they never existed; If the Average White Band had never been exposed to songs like "Licking Stick" and "I Got The Feelin'," they would have sounded... well... *white;* and if Clyde Stubblefield's mama hadn't given birth to a bouncing baby drummer, the hip hop nation's raps might have been set to Strauss waltzes. You get the idea. If you still aren't convinced, take a few minutes out to examine the hole in your soul, listen to "Cold Sweat" ten times, and call me in the morning. *Groove on.*

Allan Slutsky

Allan (Dr. Licks) Slutsky
May 1996

the set-up

The Funkmasters is a multi-purpose book that aims to tell a story and teach a musical style at the same time. As an historical text, it traces the evolution of James Brown's most important rhythm sections by profiling the lives and careers of his ground-breaking drummers, bassists, and guitarists. It also supplies background information and inside musicians' stories that, hopefully, will make hits like "Cold Sweat" and "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" come alive for you.

The transcriptions—which form the backbone of this book—offer the first in-depth, charted documentation of what James Brown's musicians actually played on these monumental recordings. Aside from the raw notes that are printed on the page, the presentation of the arrangements is intended to be a musical tutorial that helps you to play and understand these tunes by giving you a feel for the attitudes, concepts, and musical trends that went into their creation.

The historical overview which follows this section sets the stage for the period we are studying—the '60s and early '70s. The overview starts in 1952 and takes you up to "Think," the first song to mark a clear departure from James Brown's derivative '50s style. At this point the musical transcriptions begin. Each of the twenty-three chapters is based entirely on one song. These songs appear in chronological order so that you can follow the musical evolution from year to year. Within each chapter, there are four sections:

1 **The Master Score**, which shows you how the drums, bass, and guitars interact. These are mini-scores that are included for analytical purposes only. To play the individual instrumental parts, refer to the lessons.
2 **The Drum Lesson**, in which the original transcribed grooves are broken down, analyzed, and simplified into basic and intermediate levels to help you build up to the recorded version. On some of the less complex drum patterns, only the original levels will be notated.
3 **The Bass Lesson**, which features the song's original bass parts.
4 **The Guitar Lesson**, which features the song's original guitar parts.

the text

The text weaves throughout these four sections as it traces the musicians' history while pointing out technical and analytical details that will help you to play and understand these tunes. It is strongly recommended that you read the written material for all the instruments—not just your own—so that you can understand how the parts fit together from both historical and stylistic perspectives. ◆

the selection of songs

There is no way to get out of this one alive. I can hear some of you already grumbling, "Why isn't 'Get On The Good Foot' in here?" Or, "How can you have a book about James Brown and leave out songs like 'Say It Loud-I'm Black And I'm Proud,' 'There Was A Time,' and 'Ain't That A Groove'?" That's to be expected. When you are walking on hallowed ground and dealing with sanctified material such as the music of the Godfather of Soul, strong, passionate opinions and feelings are the norm.

I agree with all of you. You're probably right about almost every song you think should have been included in this book. This is a testament to the strength and vitality of James Brown's material. But unfortunately, most of us live in a world in which we can't afford to pay $75 for a four-hundred page book, and most transcriber-authors don't have three years to spend on one subject. The song selection process for *The Funkmasters* was based upon finding material from James Brown's recorded catalog that illustrated specific musical techniques and historical turning points in the musicians' story. To all of you who mourn the omission of your favorite tune, just let it be known that you've got company. Chuck Silverman desperately wanted to include "I Don't Want Nobody To Give Me Nothing," and I'm totally bummed and ashamed that a long-suffering soul man like myself had to leave out "Bring It Up." ◆

the transcriptions

Jab'o Starks has a very economical, matter-of-fact description of this music: "James Brown's songs were all about grooves." And that's what the transcriptions in this book are all about: intro grooves, verse grooves, bridge and chorus grooves, and any other type of grooves that James Brown's musicians came up with. They fall into three basic categories:

1 **Short repetitive vamps**—usually two or four bars in length—that continue uninterrupted and without any variations from the beginning of the record until the ending fade. "Licking Stick" and "Hot Pants" are typical of this attitude.
2 **Short improvisational vamps**—also two or four bars in length—that start off with a basic figure which becomes the home base for a constant stream of rhythmic and melodic variations. Tunes like "Talkin' Loud And Sayin' Nothing" and "Funky Drummer" take this route.
3 **Larger repetitive song forms**—the first five chapters feature three blues tunes and two holdovers from James Brown's '50s style that stay very close to the original ideas stated during the songs' first full pass. These song lengths are based on eight and twelve bar sections.

The transcriptions are not necessarily the full songs. In some cases, intros and short interludes have been left out as

well as large scale improvisational sections. In those instances, we have written out two or three of the best variations. The overall intent is to teach the most important grooves in James Brown's recorded catalog as opposed to teaching the songs in a note-for-note fashion.

Most of these grooves are written as open vamps without a specific number of repeats assigned to them. This is in the spirit of the band's original arrangements and the manner in which they were put together—both on stage and in the recording studio. The forms and lengths of the various sections usually changed from performance to performance at the whim of the Godfather. He didn't count bars. He went by *feel*. With an intricate system of hand signals, body movements, and screams, James stopped, started, sliced, diced, and moved on to the next groove whenever the spirit moved him. If that spirit happened to take him in the middle of a phrase, the band dropped whatever they were doing and moved on to the next section at the first available downbeat. ◆

key signatures

Depending on the musical context, some songs have been written in traditional major or minor keys with accidentals being added to accommodate blues notes and brief modal influences. In the case of a tune like "Cold Sweat," which is clearly modal, the key signature of the mode has been used instead. Some of James Brown's modal compositions are based upon the interaction of melodic lines as opposed to vertical harmonics. In these instances, the mode will be notated instead of the usual chord symbols. ◆

the CDs

Every note you find printed in this book is played on the accompanying CD's. The recorded program follows the book material page-by-page and example-by-example. Each song's *master groove* includes all the drums, bass, and guitar(s) playing together for extended periods of time so that you can practice with them. This is then followed by the individual instrumental parts broken down into lessons that are performed at slower tempos to facilitate analysis. After a brief intro speech by "Jab'o" Starks (which is I.D. #1), Chapter One begins with the master groove for "Think" (I.D.#2). I.D.#3 is the drum lesson for "Think," I.D.#4 is the bass lesson, and I.D.#5 is the guitar lesson. The next chapter, featuring the Master Score for "I Don't Mind," starts off with I.D.#6, and so on. ◆

the CD mix

One of the hardest skills for beginning and intermediate level musicians to develop is the ability to isolate and accurately hear different instruments in a complex mix. To give everyone the best opportunity to hear as much musical detail as possible on each instrument, we isolated the instruments as much as we could within the confines of what is basically a left-right, two-track situation. By turning your balance control back and forth, you can zone in on just the guitars and drums or just the bass and drums. The setup is as follows:

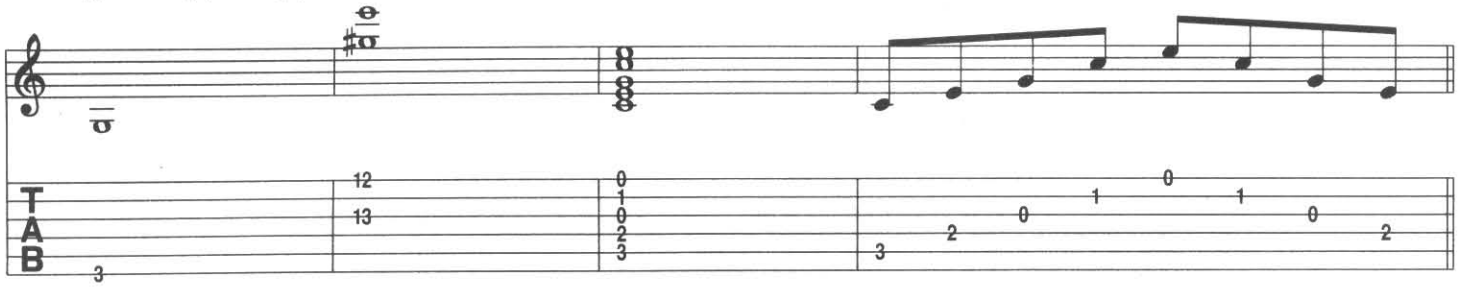
1. Drums are always panned to the center. In other words, they appear on both the left and right speakers. This applies to both the master tracks and the individual lessons.
2. The bass is panned to the right speaker on the master tracks. On the individual lessons it remains panned to the right while a hi-hat click track keeps time on the left side.
3. Guitars are panned to the left speaker on the master tracks. On the individual lessons they remain panned to the left while the hi-hat click track keeps time on the right side. ◆

tips for getting the most out of the transcriptions

1. The metronome markings on each transcription indicate how fast the original recordings where played, but you should try practicing every figure at a variety of tempos. Very slow tempos, in particular, will magnify any time problems that you may have.
2. You may find that many of the more syncopated transcribed figures you are playing take a while to settle in before they start to feel good. This is perfectly normal, so don't start questioning your sense of time. Of course it would be nice if you locked up from beat one, and it's a goal you should certainly aspire to, but keep in mind that many of James Brown's baddest recorded jams also started out on a shaky note and got stronger as the track progressed. This human element is what makes us sound different from sequencers.
3. The goal of the fingerings we have provided for the bass and guitar parts was to come as close to what we believe to be the original fingerings of James Brown's musicians. However, we encourage you to also find alternative ways of playing these parts so that they fit your particular technique and physiology. A fingering that may have felt easy and natural to "Bootsy" Collins or "Country" Kellum might seem awkward to you.
4. The count-offs generally include one "free" bar of four beats followed by any empty beats from bars involving pick-up figures.
5. When you have a one-chord funk jam, the tendency is to play the notes correctly a few times and say, "I got it." You just might be right, but with the majority of us, I can guarantee you that "you ain't got it." The question you have to ask yourself is, "Can I play this figure over and over for four or five minutes, lock in with the other instruments, and make it feel great?" When James Brown talks about "Doing It To Death," he's referring to the musical and emotional commitment you need to play his music. If your standards are anywhere near as tough as his, you'll do just fine. ◆

LEGEND OF MUSICAL SYMBOLS

Reading Tablature: Tablature illustrates the six strings of the guitar. Notes and chords are indicated by the placement of fret numbers on a given string (or strings).

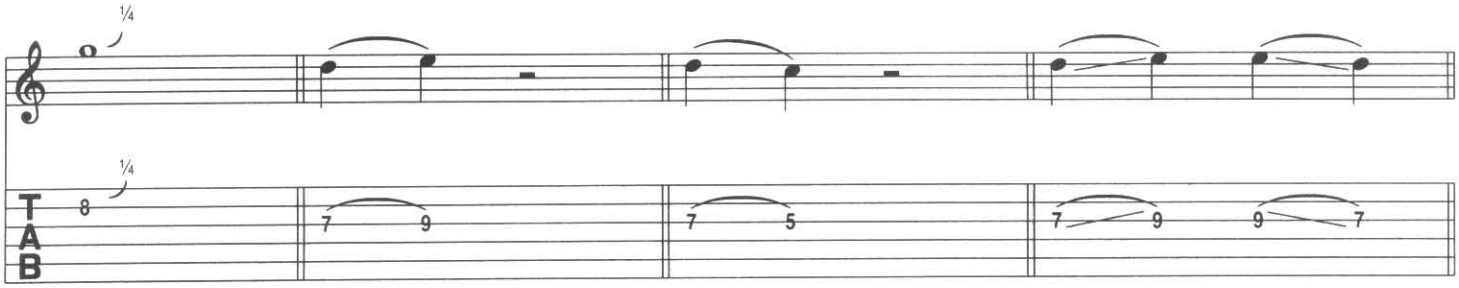


String ⑥, 3rd *Fret*

String ①, 12th *Fret*
String ③, 13th *Fret*

A "C" Chord

C Chord Arpeggiated

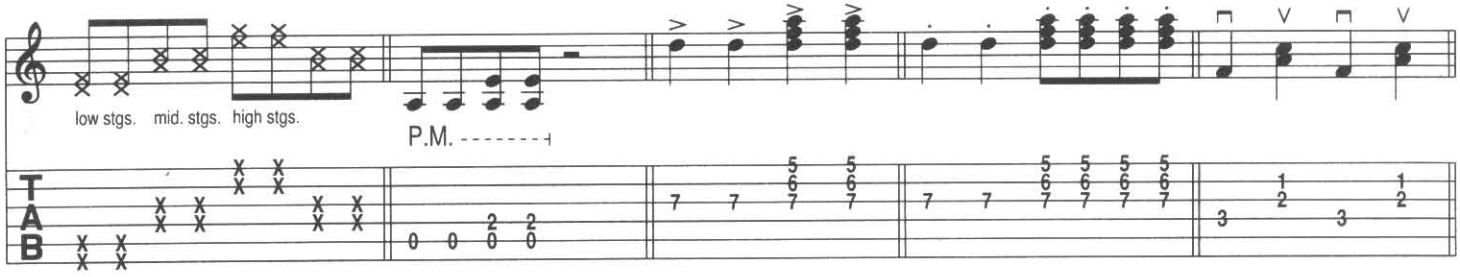


Slight Bend (Microtone):
Play the note and bend string slightly to the equivalent of half a fret.

Hammer On:
Play the note, then "hammer on" to higher note with another finger. Only the first note is attacked.

Pull Off:
Play higher note, then "pull off" to lower note with another finger. Only the first note is attacked.

Legato Slide:
Play note and slide to the following note. Only the first note is attacked.



Muted Strings:
A percussive sound is made by laying the fret hand across all six strings while pick hand strikes specified area (low, mid, high strings).

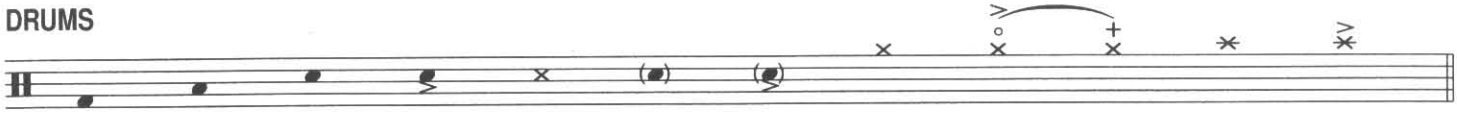
Palm Mute:
The note or notes are muted by the palm of the pick hand by lightly touching the string(s) near the bridge.

Accent:
Notes or chords are to be played with added emphasis.

Staccato (Detached notes):
Notes or chords are to be played roughly half their actual value and with separation.

Downstrokes and Upstrokes:
Notes or chords are to be played with either a downstroke (⊓) or upstroke (V) of the pick.

DRUMS



Kick | **Tom** | **Snare** | **Accented Snare** | **Cross-Stick** | **Ghosted Snare** | **Accented Ghosted Snare** | **Closed Hi-Hat** | **Open and Closed Hi-Hat** | **Ride Cymbal** | **Crash Cymbal**

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW: THE EARLY YEARS

Tracing the musical and historical lineage of James Brown's sidemen is not quite as overwhelming a task as mapping out the migration of the Visigoths through Europe in the third century A.D., but it *does* run a close second. It's quite understandable in light of the the Godfather's propensity for hiring and firing, the burnout that band members experienced from the more than 300 one nighters a year, and the fact that James Brown has just begun his fifth decade as a performer; it takes a lot of bodies to fill up that kind of temporal space. Nevertheless, all the musicians who traveled down his hit-laden path—the no-names who lasted a few months, the important rhythm section players who remained in intact units long enough to develop signature sounds, and the handful of personnel who persevered with him almost from the beginning—found continuity and unification from two common threads: the irrepressible vision of James Brown and an unyielding search, on their part, for the ultimate groove.

The first noteworthy band that James Brown was a part of was the Gospel Starlighters (AKA the Avons), a seven-piece rhythm and blues group led by his lifelong friend and musical partner, Bobby Byrd. There wasn't much of a rhythm section when Brown joined the band in 1952. The threadbare instrumental backing was supplied by himself, Byrd, and a few other band members who took turns on a homemade set of drums and a piano (which was included only if the juke joint they were playing had one). There was no bass at all, and the Sears guitar owned by Nafloyd Scott usually became useless as soon as the amp heated up. The feedback and squeals coming out of the tiny speaker drowned out anything he played.

The band's popularity in their hometown of Toccoa, Georgia and the surrounding environs stemmed more from their high-energy stage presentation than their bluesy and gospelized covers of Hank Ballard, Little Willie John, and Five Royales tunes. By 1955, the Avons had changed their name to the Flames and shortly thereafter, to the Famous Flames, prompting Little Richard to tell them, "You were the onliest band that was famous before you was famous." As time went on, James Brown's near-suicidal stage presentation had brought him to the forefront of the act. Traveling R&B groups like Hank Ballard and the Midnighters, the Dominoes, and even Little Richard soon learned to fear coming into the Flames turf because of their habit of taking the stage unannounced to "cut" any act that had the audacity to trespass in their backyard. Compared to the home-town product, everyone else seemed to be moving in slow motion.

On the strength of regional air play of a song cut in the basement of local radio station WIBB, James Brown and the Famous Flames caught the attention of both Chicago's Chess Records and Cincinnati's independent R&B label, King Records. Leonard Chess—who had turned down signing Elvis Presley—blew it again. A violent thunderstorm grounded his plane flight to Georgia, enabling King's A&R man Ralph Bass to beat him to the punch. Bass signed the act for the princely sum of $200. Traveling to King's Cincinnati headquarters in February of 1956, Brown recorded four tunes including "Please, Please, Please," a gospel-influenced treatment of an old blues standard called "Baby Please Don't Go." Backed by King's house band, which included drummer Edison Gore, bassist Clarence Mack, and pianist Alvin "Fats" Gonder, James got his first glimpse of what a *real* rhythm section could do.

King was run and owned by Syd Nathan, an old, crotchety, cigar-chomping businessman who understood little about music but knew a lot about the music business. Upon hearing the result of James Brown's first King recording session, Nathan exploded and called "Please, Please, Please" "A piece of shit," while fuming, "all he's saying is one word." Begrudgingly released on Federal, a subsidiary label of King, it eventually sold over a million copies and reached #5 on the *Billboard* R&B chart.

Constantly touring the South promoting the record, Brown's ego and overwhelming stage presence eventually overshadowed the rest of the Flames. Abandoned and alone after they quit in 1957, he was saved by one of the fringe benefits of the King recording session. Working as a single, James linked up with Little Richard's sideman, "Fats" Gonder, who took on the roles of pianist and musical director. An endless string of one-nighters ensued during which the two were usually at the mercy of pick-up bands and last minute fill-ins. Finding time in between his live gigs, James continued to record for King, but his following nine singles bombed and Syd Nathan was about to drop him.

In September of '58, hanging on by his fingernails, he convinced Nathan to let him record "Try Me," a derivative, late '50s style 12/8 ballad that, except for his voice, could have been mistaken for the Platters, the Dominoes or any number of R&B vocal groups popular in that era. Working again with hired guns, James struck gold with a cast of New York studio all-stars that included jazz guitar great Kenny Burrell (dig his very "risqué" C major 7th voicing at the end of the track) and veteran drummer David "Panama" Francis. Brown's reward for his unwavering confidence and vision was his first #1 R&B hit.

By this time, it was obvious that he desperately needed his own band. You don't cut #1 hits and then go out on the road to support them with pick-up bands. The opportunity he had been waiting for surfaced when Little Richard's entry into the ministry allowed Brown to pick up the remains of his backup band, the Upsetters. Setting out in earnest to further augment his legions, Brown also recruited North Carolina tenor saxophon-

ist J.C. Davis to lead his band, as well as adding drummer Nat Kendrick, guitarist Bobby Roach, and a bassist from Mobile, Alabama named Bernard Odum (Bernard had been sporadically playing gigs with JB from mid '56). For the first time in his career, James had a permanent rhythm section.

The new band began recording with James Brown in December of '58 but had to wait another month before they cut their first hit. Scoring with "Bewildered" in January of 1959, this early unit then went on to help the previously southern based Brown break through to northern audiences. JB assaulted the nation's airwaves with "Good Good Lovin'," "I'll Go Crazy," "I Know It's True," and a variety of other vocal tracks that featured his new band's instrumental backings. The band also became an integral part of Brown's live shows when they joined a new set of Flames (which included returning originals Johnny Terry and Bobby Byrd) in developing one of the sacred rituals of JB's stage act: the "Please Please Please" cape routine.

Throughout 1959, the band also went on to cut a series of moderately successful, James Brown-directed instrumental sides. Because of legal problems, the most famous of these, 1959's "(Do The) Mashed Potatoes," had to be released on a small Miami label called Dade Records under the name, Nat Kendrick & The Swans. In spite of the success of their featured spots during Brown's live shows, Syd Nathan refused to release the recording on King after he soured on the entire concept in the wake of an instrumental flop called "Doodle Bug."

Much of James Brown's recorded output throughout the '50s was conformist from the standpoint of form. 12/8 ballads, shuffles, and jump blues were the steady diet of R&B acts on the chitlin' circuit, and James got right in line. That lasted all of five minutes. Almost immediately, the line bent, zigged, and zagged. Brown stayed within the established forms, but on his own terms. Right from his debut on 12/8 ballads like "Please Please Please" to shuffles like "Tell Me What I Did Wrong," he exhibited his life-long penchant for highlighting his vocals with dramatic stop-start effects, unusual unison band accents, and short, quirky instrumental interludes.

Toward the end of the decade, the influence of his new musicians further widened the gap between his sound and the more conservative offerings from the mainstream R&B artists of the day. Yes, "Good Good Lovin'" is a blues, but it's a thirteen-bar blues that's extended by a one-bar drum fill at the turnaround. You also won't find too many songs of the day that featured G13(♯9) voicings like the bridge of "I'll Go Crazy." Nothing in James Brown's previous musical experience had come close to the complexity of that type of harmonic structure.

Regardless of innovations in both his arrangements and vocal presentation, James still hadn't achieved the stylistic breakthrough he had been looking for. He found it during a hastily arranged West Coast session in early 1960 when he cut a track called "Think," a record that he points to as the turning point in his transformation from a rhythm and blues artist to a soul singer. It's also the record that cut the umbilical cord between the band's '50s and '60s grooves. ◆

© Michael Ochs Archives/Venice, CA

The original Flames, 1954
L to R: Sylvester Keels, Nash Knox, Fred Pulliam, James Brown (on drums), Nafloyd Scott, Bobby Byrd, and "Baby" Roy Scott.

chapter 1

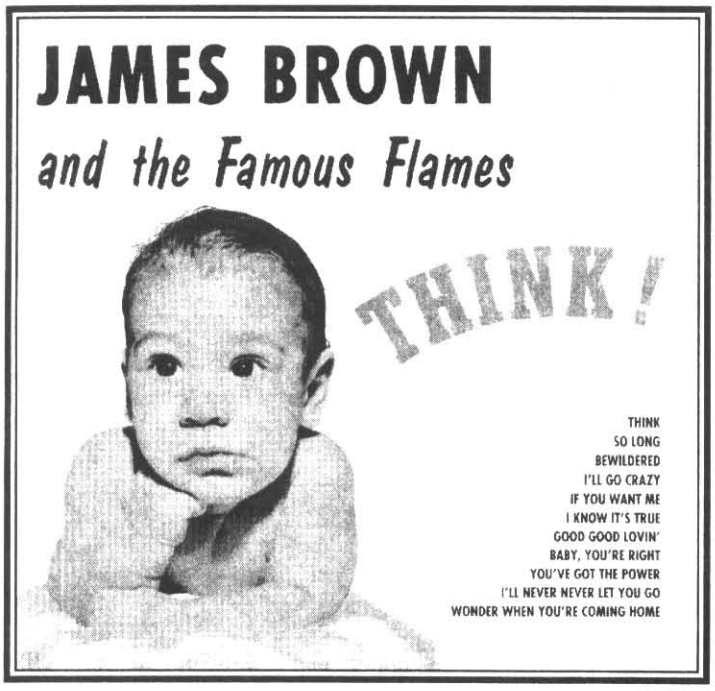
THINK

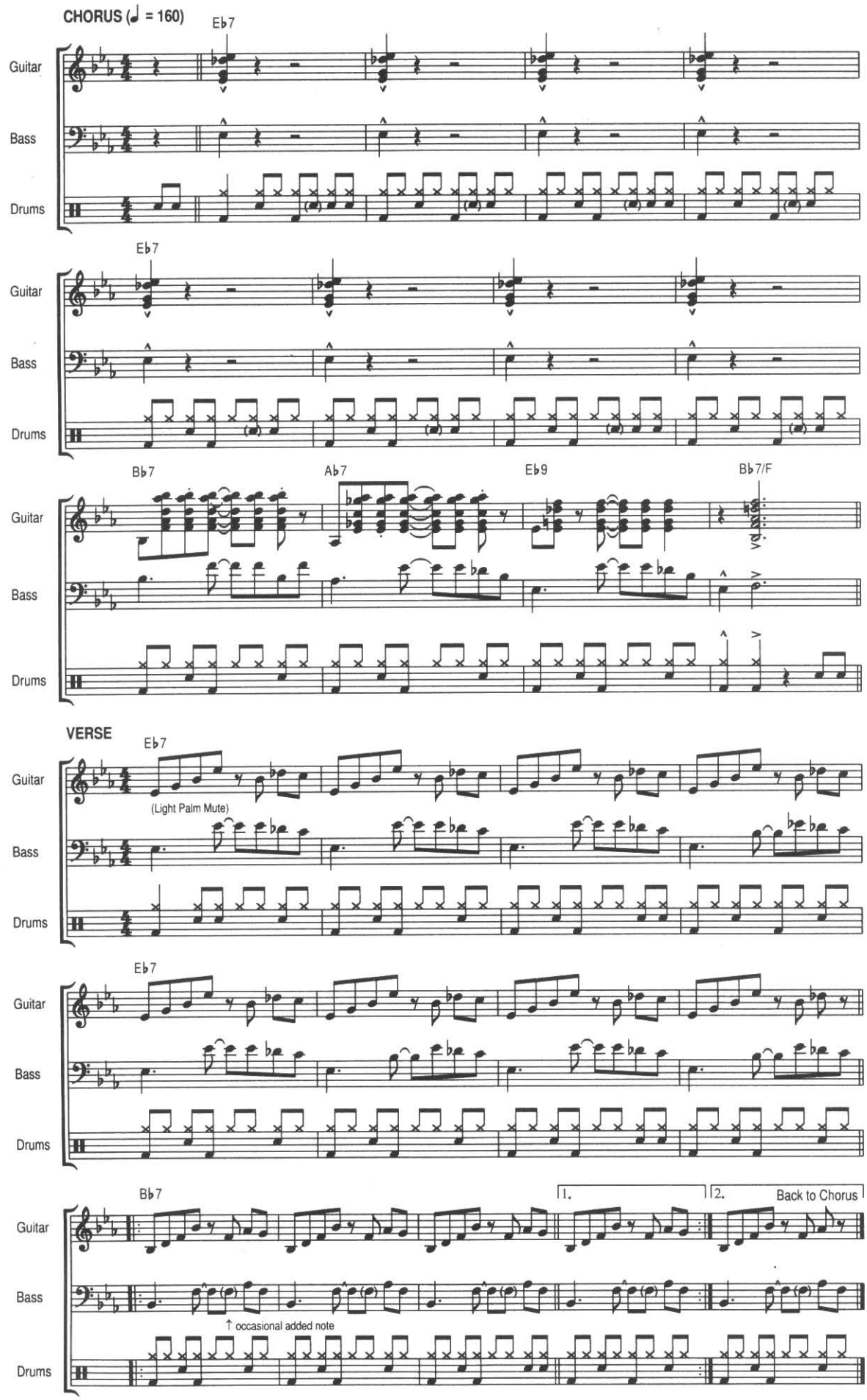
recorded february, 1960

By February 1960, the trio of Nat Kendrick, Bernard Odum, and Bobby Roach was on its way to developing its own signature sound. In the year-and-a-half since they had taken on the role of James Brown's inaugural rhythm section, they had performed hundreds of live dates, crisscrossing the country countless times en route to enabling him to become virtually independent of record sales. With the limitations and headaches of his previous pick-up band situation behind him, JB knew that even if he never charted another hit, this kick-ass unit would keep him working for years.

Since their maiden voyage on 1959's "Bewildered," the handful of significant records cut by the Kendrick-Odum-Roach collaboration were all solidly executed examples of late '50s rhythm and blues, containing noteworthy stylistic innovations as well as stellar individual performances. The band as a whole, however, had yet to break through with a distinctive overall concept that adequately complemented the gargantuan talent standing at the microphone. During the recording session of "Think," they found their defining moment.

This hard-driving version of the Five Royales' 1957 hit bore very little resemblance to the easygoing, bluesy shuffle that Royales' guitarist, Lowman Pauling, had originally conceived. James Brown and his band had given the tune a complete makeover, ripping up the form, changing the harmonic structure, and infusing it with a wickedly seductive groove. As British James Brown biographer Cliff White commented, "This was from a different plane of consciousness to the Five Royales and their contemporaries: suddenly, '50s R&B was yesterday, and James Brown was tomorrow." Unfortunately, "tomorrow" didn't include Kendrick, Odum, and Roach. Before the end of the year, a new rhythm section would be in place. ◆

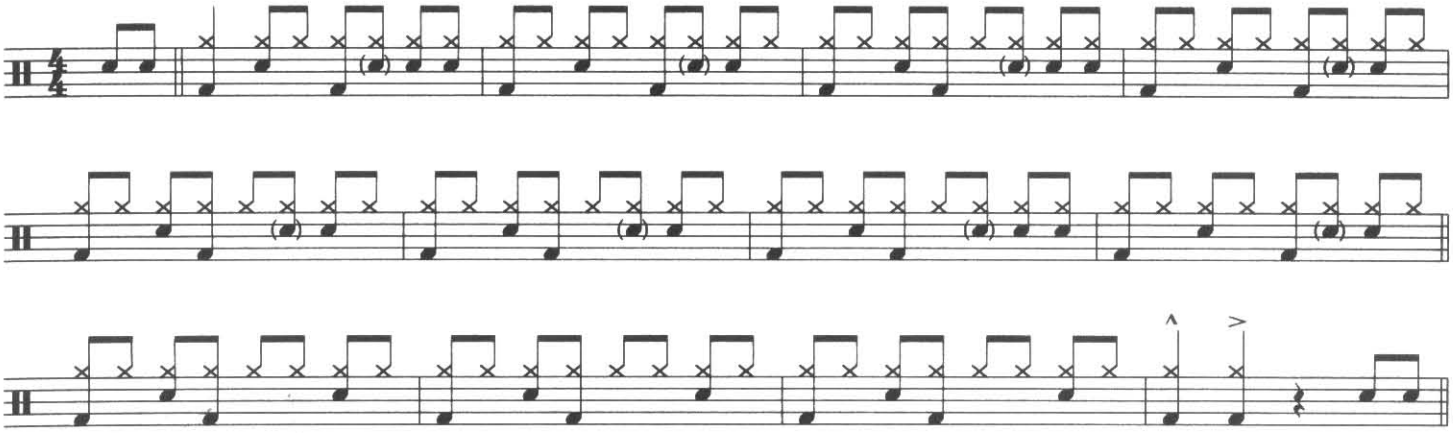



CHORUS (♩ = 160)
Eb7
Guitar
Bass
Drums
Eb7
Bb7
Ab7
Eb9
Bb7/F
VERSE
Eb7
(Light Palm Mute)
Eb7
Bb7
1.
2.
Back to Chorus
↑ occasional added note

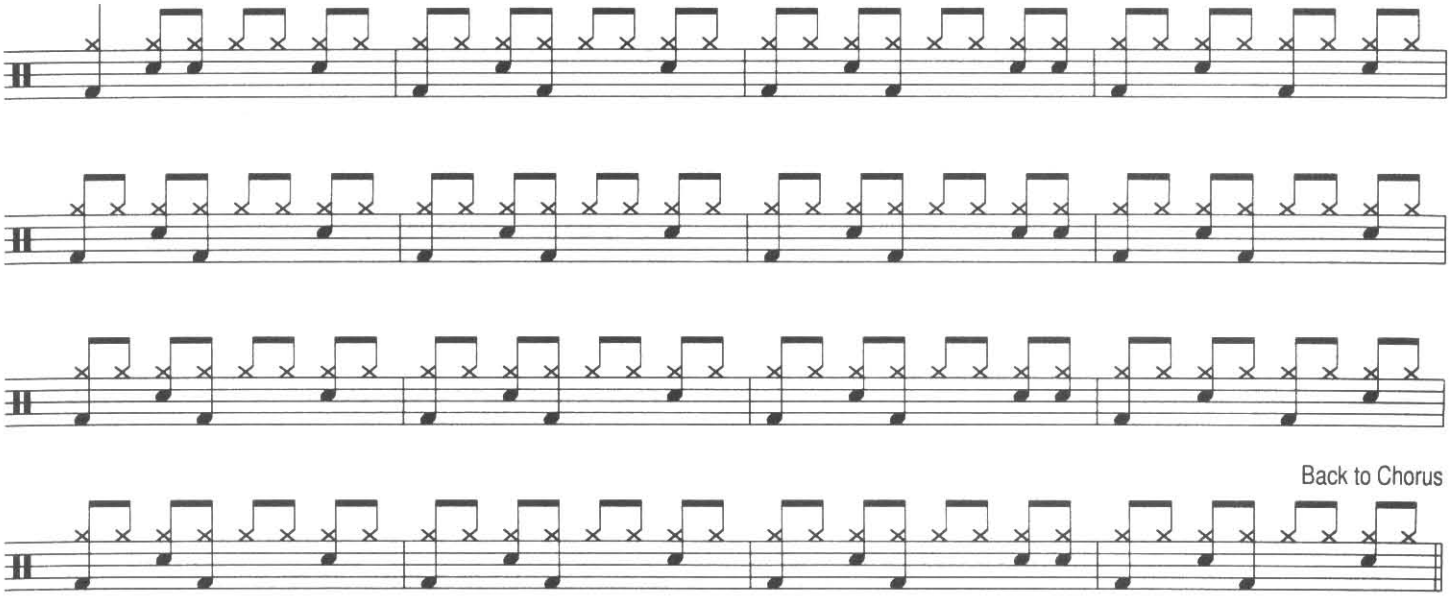
NAT KENDRICK •drums•

Don't blame me if you have trouble locking in on this beat. Blame Nat Kendrick and the schizophrenic drum track he created on this tune. Eighth-notes are usually either swung or they're played straight. In this song, Nat placed his eighth-note feel in that nether world where it's somewhere in between. They're not quite swung but they're not exactly straight either. The time is also caught between two dimensions as his snare drum is constantly pushing the beat while the hi-hat is pulling back. The good news about all of this is that the feel is happening to death, and it electrifies the entire track. The bad news is that you have to try and match it. ◆

CHORUS (♩ = 160)



VERSE

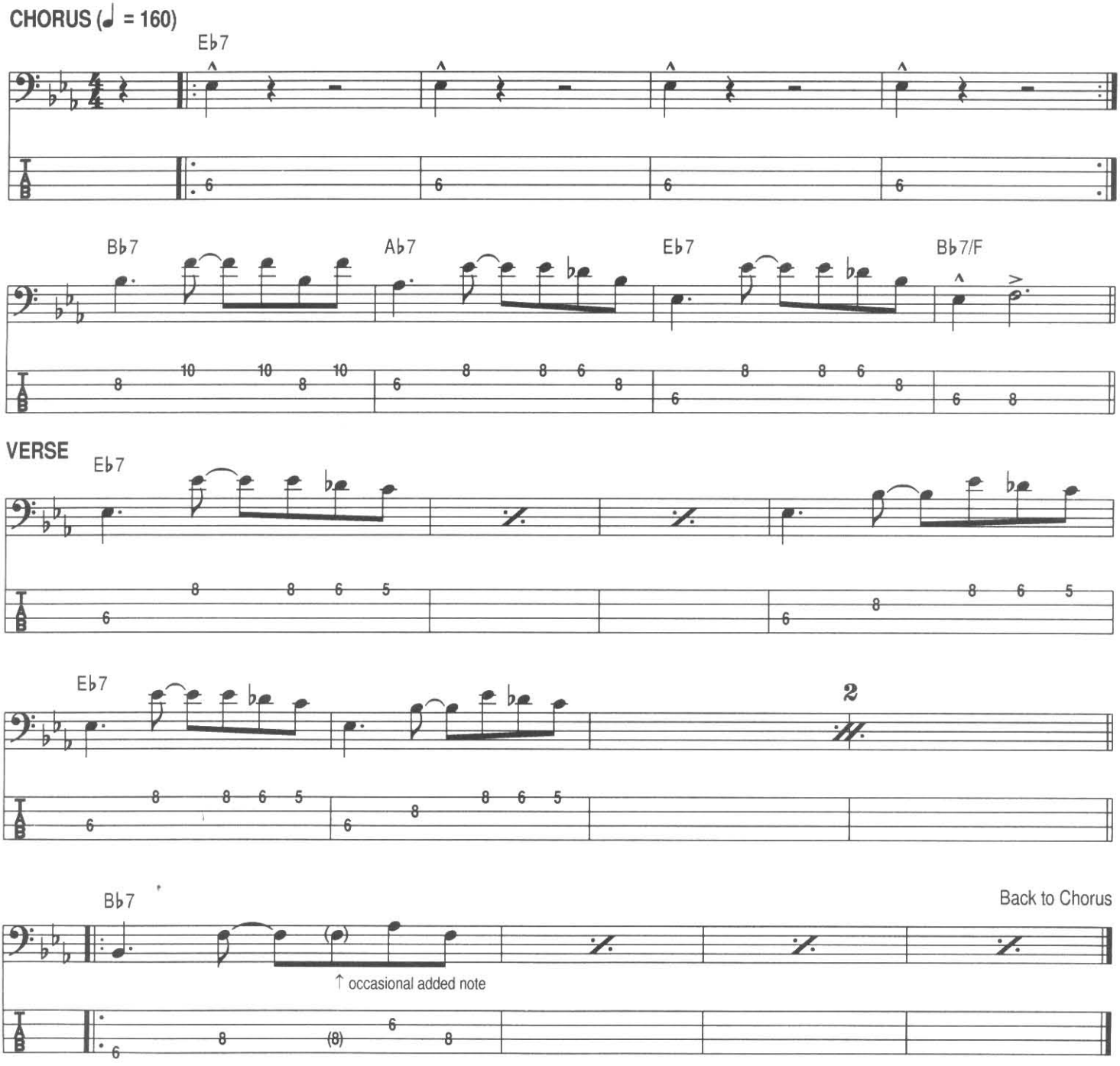


Back to Chorus

BERNARD ODUM •bass•

CD 1 4 TRACK

Sometimes, a musician's best lick is plain old common sense. Before the advent of five- and six-string basses, bass players often tuned the E string down a half-step when playing in the key of E♭ in order to take advantage of the open string and the bottom end of the instrument. However, in this tune, Bernard Odum apparently opted not to take that route, resulting in some fairly high register bass lines. Even though there's not a lot of bottom to this part, the harmonic foundation is never lacking because Bernard wisely chose to emphasize roots and fifths throughout the tune. In addition, staying right with the kick drum on beat "one" and the "and" of beat "two" helped to give this bass part some added punch. It almost makes you completely forget that the bottom octave of the instrument is ignored for the majority of his performance. ◆



The large barre chord voicings that Bobby Roach played on the B♭7 and A♭7 chords on the chorus of this tune would quickly become a thing of the past once JB hit his stride in the mid-'60s. Small three- and four-note voicings would be the new bag, but on this tune, particularly because of the high register of the bass, the added bottom of the barre chords makes them the right tool for the job. Pay strict attention to the staccato markings on these chords. They'll help to give your strum the right feel. The most difficult aspect of this guitar part is capturing the same half-swung/half-straight eighth-note feel that's being laid down by drummer Nat Kendrick. You'll find out just how good you are when you try to lock up with him on the muted eighth-note arpeggios in the verse. ◆

CHORUS (♩ = 160)

E♭7

B♭7 A♭7 E♭9 B♭7/F

VERSE E♭7

(Light Palm Mute)

(3) (5) (7)

B♭7 (3)

1. 2. Back to Chorus

chapter 2

I DON'T MIND

recorded live october, 1962

Get on your white robes and prepare to be baptized in holy water. We got a serious revival meeting happening here. It's little wonder that the spiritual ambience of this track is overwhelming. When you're listening to James Brown mesmerize an audience into a trance-like state under the roof of soul music's most sanctified venue, spirituality is a foregone conclusion. When James walked through the Apollo Theater's stage door on October 24, 1962, little did he know that he was about to create a live album to which all future live recordings would be compared. Typical of his stormy relationship with King Records, it took him almost a year to convince Syd Nathan to release it. Typical of Nathan's often myopic lack of vision concerning Brown, *Live At The Apollo* quickly became the second best-selling album in the country.

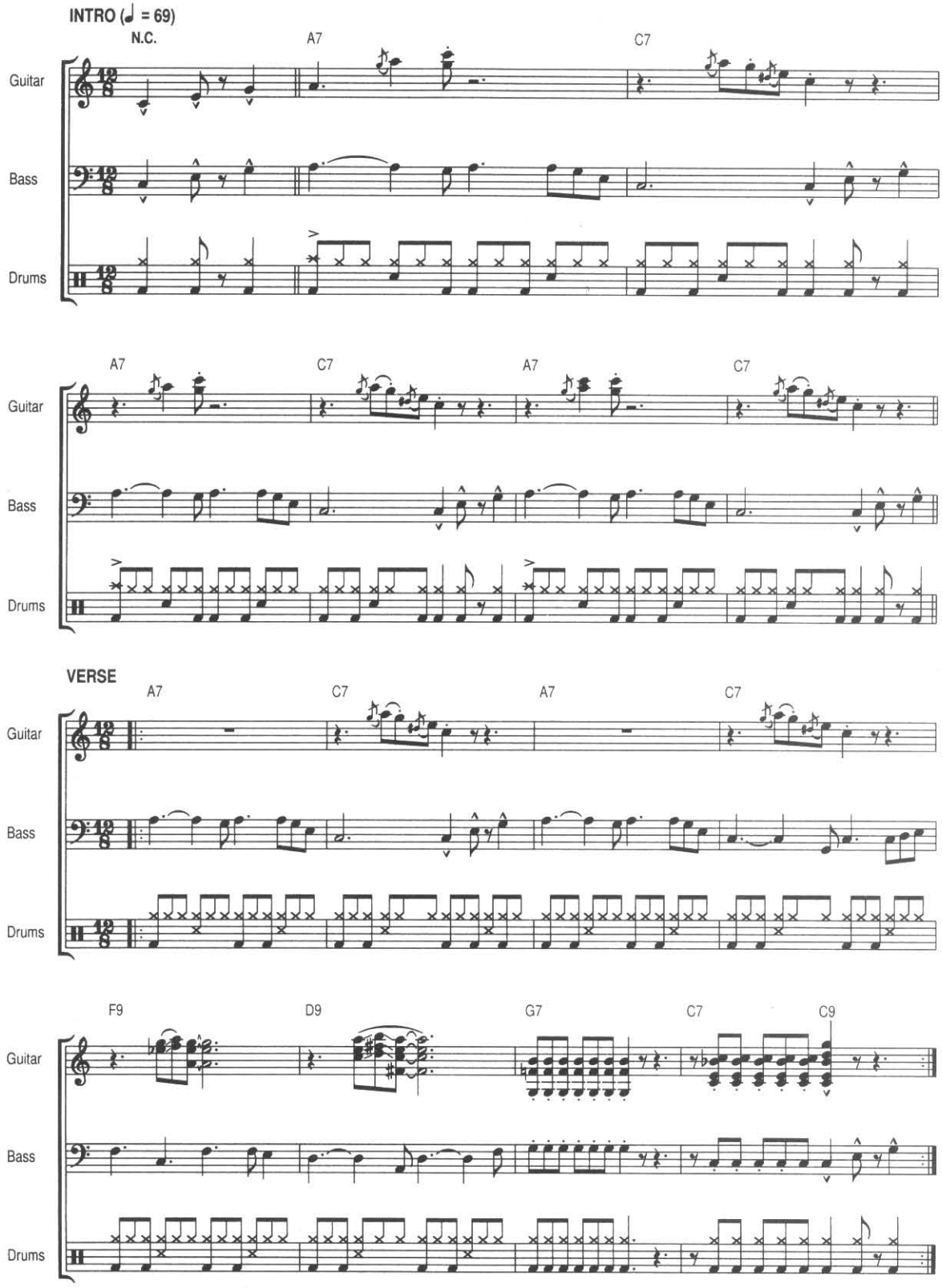
You know you're into some deep stuff as soon as you hear Alvin "Fats" Gonder's swirling, church organ voicings and the rapid-fire "I don't minds" of the Flames call and response vocal background. Adding to the haunting quality of this track is one of the stranger chord progressions in JB's repertoire. The movement of the A7 (the VI chord) to the C7 (the I chord) is a bit unorthodox to say the least. In major keys, VI chords are usually minor. If they are dominant sevenths as this one is, they tend to lead into either a II minor or II dominant seventh chord. In the case of "I Don't Mind," the VI chord just moves directly to the I chord, contributing to the eerie mood of this track. During the recording of the 1961 studio version of this same tune, Gene Redd, King Records' musical director challenged Brown on this progression, claiming it was wrong. When King's determined vocal star responded, "That's the way we're going to record it, or we're not going to record it at all," Redd wisely backed off.

The life span of James Brown's first rhythm section was fleeting. In the summer of 1960, bassist Bernard Odum and guitarist Bobby Roach were replaced by Hubert Perry and Les Buie. Nat Kendrick hung on until December of '61, at which point Clayton Fillyau took over the drum chores. The Perry-Buie-Fillyau rhythm section's stay was not much longer than their predecessors'. They hung around long enough to record *Live At The Apollo,* but shortly thereafter fell victims to the band's never-ending lineup changes.

The instability of James Brown's sideman roster stemmed in part from his endless quest to find musicians who could help create the music he heard in his head. But there was also a much more troublesome and deep-rooted cause. In late 1961, when James Brown replaced bandleader J.C. Davis with trumpeter Lewis Hamlin, it seemed to be a standard clash between a singer and one of his musicians. "JC started to think it was his band," Brown explained in his autobiography. When new drummer Clayton Fillyau also began to butt heads with Brown, it was no longer an isolated incident. The tone appeared to be set for a career-long pattern of confrontation between the boss and his sidemen. ◆

I DON'T MIND •master score•

CD 1 6 TRACK



CLAYTON FILLYAU •drums•

Although Clayton Fillyau spent almost three and a half years with James Brown, much of that time was a tenuous on again-off again affair. His one period of extended quality time was chosen wisely; it was 1962, the year of *Live At The Apollo.* Clayton's most important achievement on this legendary album was not so much *what* he played, as much as *how* he played. "I Don't Mind" embodies many of the emotional and dramatic elements that he conveys throughout the album.

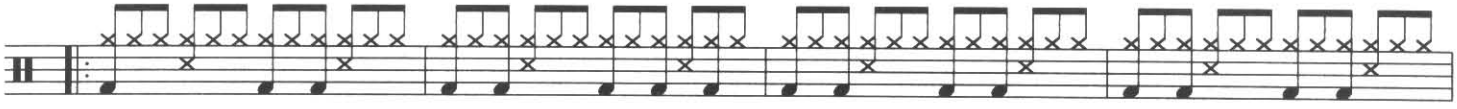
12/8 ballads are musical quagmires. They can be spellbinding and uplifting when performed the right way. In less than skilled hands, they can die a thousand deaths and make you wish you were an accountant instead of a musician. James Brown's incandescent performance on this track could easily have been wasted without the dynamic control, rock steady time, and understated intensity that Clayton provided. From the subtle crescendos on each of the accented, four-note arpeggiated motifs, to the breakneck drop to pianissimo on verse one, to the bombastic four-note ending, Clayton makes the entire track breathe. Brown's complex system of body English may have called all the shots, but the actual implementation of all those musical commands was funneled through Clayton Fillyau's drum sticks.

Throughout 1963 and 1964, Clayton didn't contribute much as a live or recording musician due to the erratic and sometimes stormy working relationship he had with the boss. He seemed more content to drive the band's equipment truck and coach the ever widening roster of James Brown drummers. Nat Kendrick had returned in the late fall of 1962, and over the next two years Gino Gonzales, Obie Williams, and Sam Lathan were also rotated in and out. In March, 1965, Fillyau finally cut his ties with the band and left to tour with Chicago soul singer Major Lance. ◆

INTRO (♩ = 69)

Play 3 times

VERSE

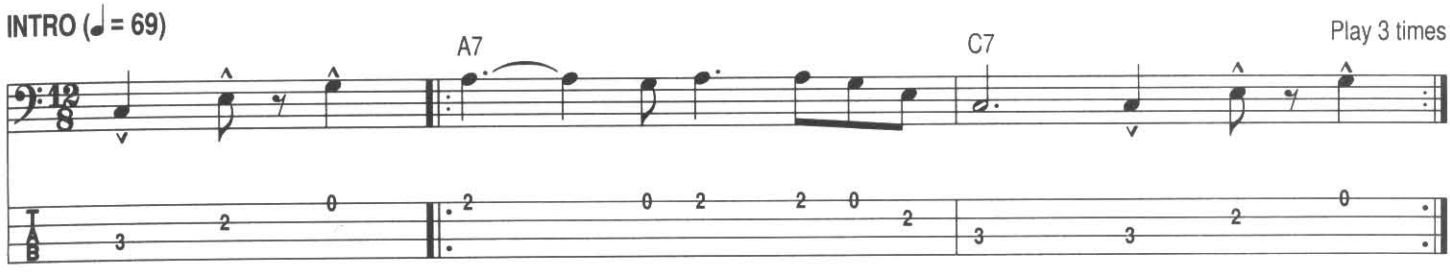


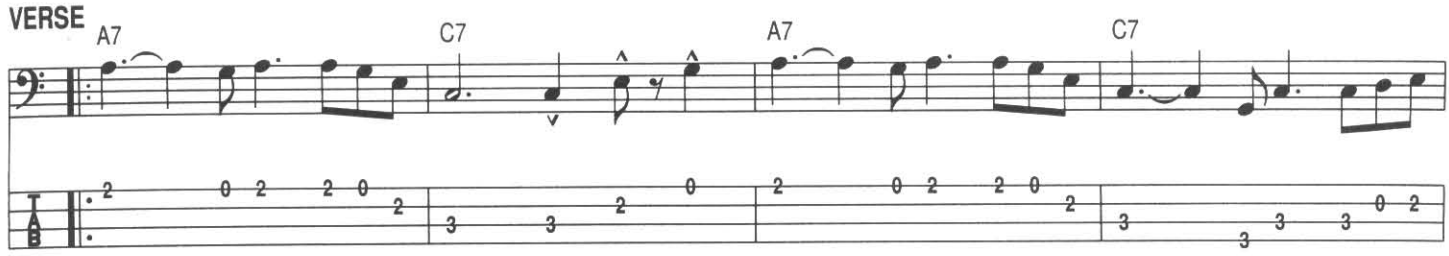
When Bernard Odum was replaced by Hubert Perry in the summer of 1960, most James Brown aficionados assumed he had left the band. According to Bernard, they were just looking at the wrong part of the stage. "I became a Flame for about a year," he explains. "It was kind of an emergency thing. James needed another singer so I helped out. He always knew I could sing 'cause in the early days when we were just five pieces, I used to play bass and sing background at the same time. Then after I stopped being a Flame, I took off for a year."

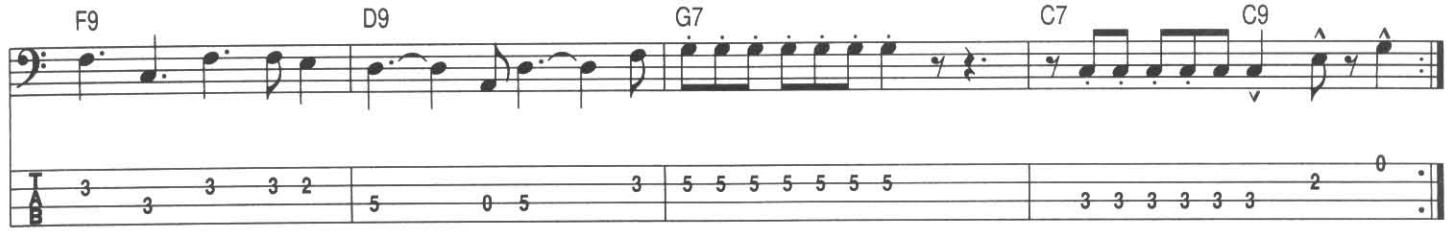
During Bernard's brief flirtation with singing and throughout his subsequent hiatus, Hubert Perry was the sole bassist, providing the bottom on all the live dates and recording sessions that transpired during this two-year period. Hubert's tenure lasted long enough to make the celebrated October 1962 Apollo gig—clearly the scene of his finest recorded bass work. "I Don't Mind" is a textbook example of restrained, mature bass playing. Laying down a simple, almost mantra-like pattern through each of the four verses, Hubert shows that he clearly recognizes his role in this particular tune. While James Brown was trying to cast his spell on the audience, the last thing he needed was for his bass player to disrupt the mood by drawing attention to himself.

The central melodic theme of this arrangement is carried by the bass. The four-note motif ("C," "E," "G," "A") that leads into the A7 harmony is played throughout the intro, the first four bars of every verse, and the ending. Each time this theme is stated, it is immediately answered by a Les Buie guitar fill. Hubert then plays the same four-note figure in reverse ("A," "G," "E," "C") and Buie echoes it verbatim on the next downbeat. The last note of this four-note guitar lick overlaps into the first note of Hubert's restatement of the original ascending version of the theme, as the cycle begins all over again. The contrapuntal approach of the bass and guitar finally ends once they reach the four-bar turnaround (F, D7, G7, C7) at the end of each verse. The guitar continues to fill, but the bass changes to a conventional root-fifth treatment.

A few months after the recording of *Live At The Apollo,* Bernard Odum returned to the band, sharing the bass chair with Hubert Perry through mid-1963. By the summer, Hubert was back at his home in Augusta, Georgia, leaving behind a string of masterful bass performances that included early James Brown classics like "Baby, You're Right," "Lost Someone," "Night Train," "I've Got Money," and, of course, the entire *Live at the Apollo* album. ◆







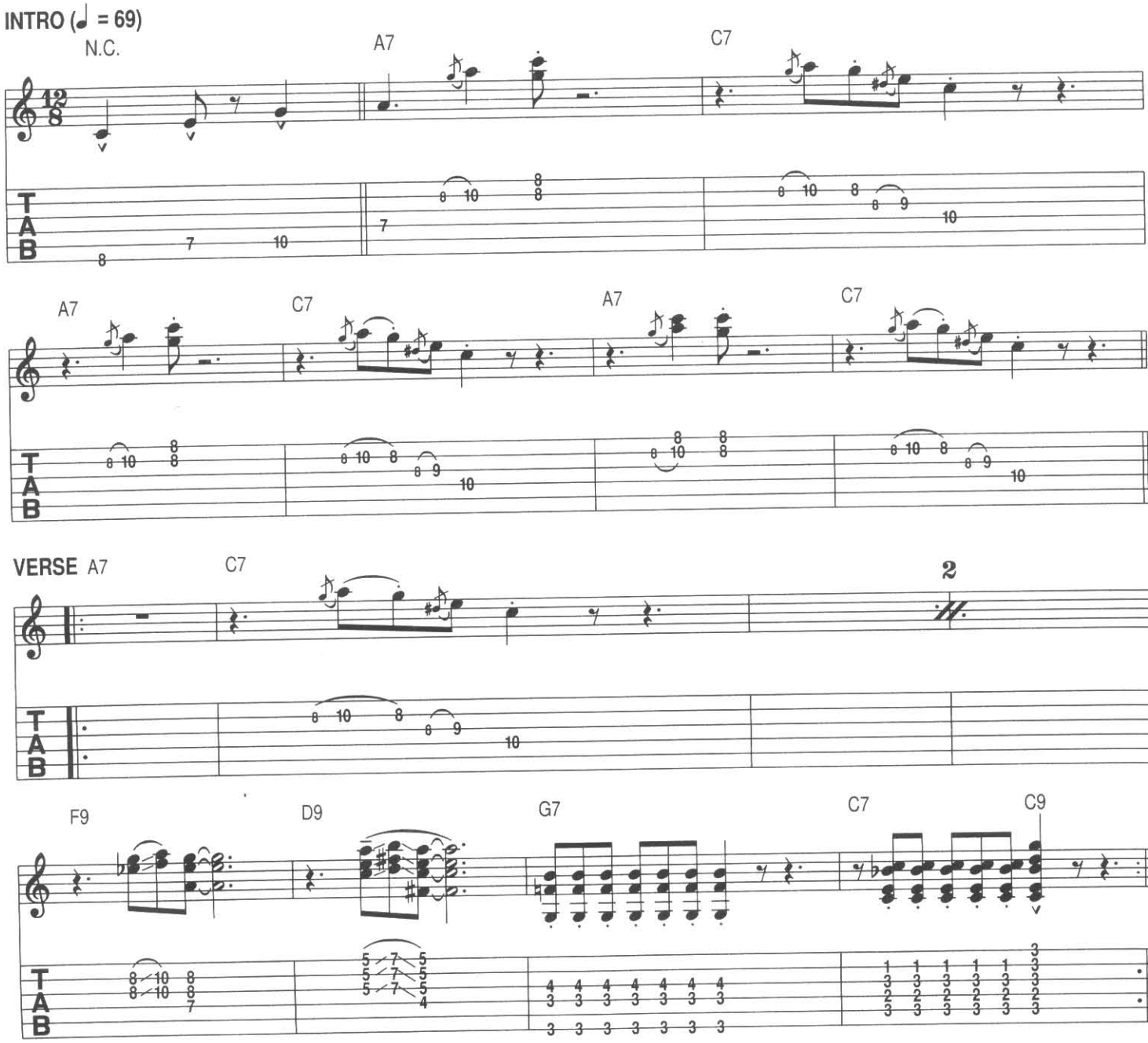
LES BUIE •guitar•

CD 1 9 TRACKING

Like many R&B guitarists of this era, Les Buie had a gig bag full of blues, jazz, and countrified fills that usually came right off of the nearest chord shape. The intent was to be as smooth and relaxed as possible by playing voicings and licks that were right under your hands. (Shredders probably view this as an obscene concept.) Throughout the intro and first four bars of the verses of "I Don't Mind," Les latches on to a C6 voicing fingered at the eighth fret and doesn't move more than a fret or two in either direction. By maintaining this same C6 voicing idea against the A7 chord change, "Fats" Gonder's organ voicing is given an A7♯9 flavor because of the "C" naturals in the guitar part.

The only time Les plays the song's main instrumental theme ("C," "E," "G," "A") is at the pickup bar at the beginning of the record and at the ending. Immediately following the initial thematic statement, he enters into the contrapuntal relationship with Hubert that was described in the previous bass lesson. At the turnaround, Les breaks away from shadowing the bass line and plays some very hip F9th and D9th fills based upon sliding the upper notes of these 9th voicings up a whole step and back—another example of playing licks right off of the chord voicing of the moment.

The third repetition of the verse features a completely novel concept for a James Brown recording—a real live guitar solo!! Go through the Godfather's discography as many times as you want. You won't find too many of these bad boys. ("Say It Loud—I'm Black And I'm Proud" and "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothin'" are two of the exceptions that you might want to explore.) ◆



chapter 3

OUT OF SIGHT

recorded may, 1964

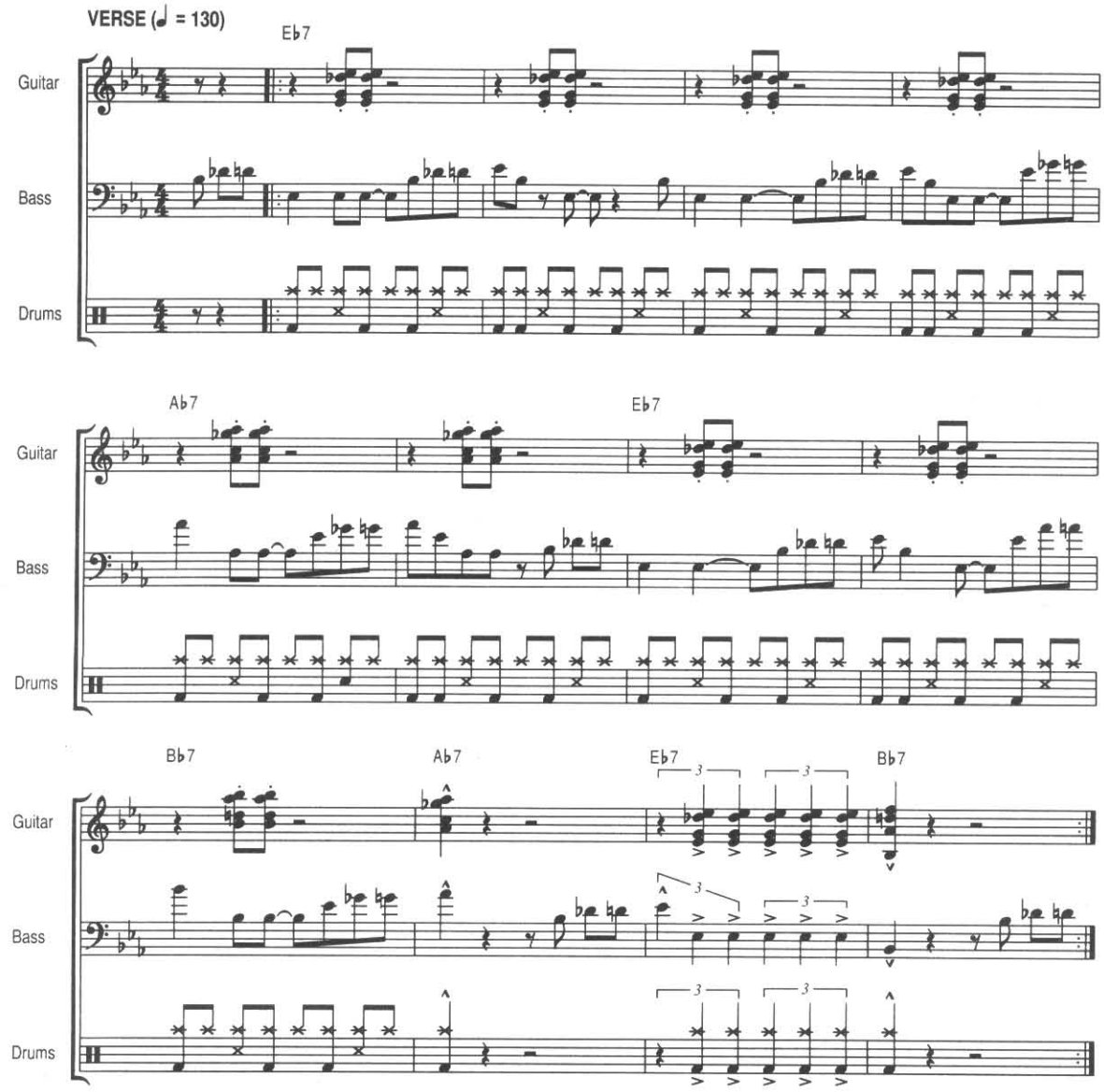
The original 45 single release of "Out of Sight" is much more than just a record. It is a time portal—a gateway from which you can see both the past and the future. Turn the record to the "B" side and you find the swan song of the Famous Flames. The aptly named "Maybe the Last Time" was their last recorded performance. It was also the last of the gospel inspired 12/8 tunes that comprised much of James Brown's catalog throughout his early years.

The flip side—side "A"—was uncharted territory. James still held to the blues format that had been his security blanket throughout his career, but new developments began to show up: the emergence of modality in his vocal parts, the ending tag with chromatically ascending dominant 7th chords (D♭7-D7-E♭7), and the quirky, four-bar saxophone interlude are all elements that would be echoed in his arrangements for the next decade.

James also begins to exhibit his propensity for milking a hit for all its worth by subtly reworking and refining it over a series of new recordings. "Out of Sight," "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," and "I Got You" are all essentially the same tune. Each is a twelve-bar blues with similar vocal phrasing and instrumental hooks occurring in the last two bars at the turnaround. Given the difficult task of making them all sound different within this very restrictive compositional framework, James Brown's sidemen—led by new musical director and alto saxophonist Nat Jones—came up big. Each of these three tunes is a unique gem in its own right. ◆

Frank Driggs Collection

James Brown on the T.A.M.I. show, 1964.
L to R: Bobby Bennett, "Baby" Lloyd Stallworth, Les Buie (guitar), Bobby Byrd, Melvin Parker (drums)



Ain't Show Bidness Grand?

Because of the grueling touring schedule that often surpassed 300 one-nighters per year, creature comforts were compulsory to make the gig tolerable. James Brown's musicians traveled in three luxuriously appointed deluxe touring buses followed by two 50 ft. semi's that transported more than five tons of musical equipment, lights, scaffolds, and staging equipment. . . . . *Yeah, right.* This isn't the '80s and '90s. We're talking mid-'60s Chitlin' Circuit touring. James Brown's road caravan was austere and simple: One small truck for the instruments, uniforms, and a small PA system, and one Greyhound-style bus—no sleeping berths, no kitchen or refrigerator, no TV, no stereo system or VCR's, and sometimes, not even air conditioning. The band generally stayed in modest lodgings—unless they had to leave for the next town right after the show, in which case the bus was the hotel.

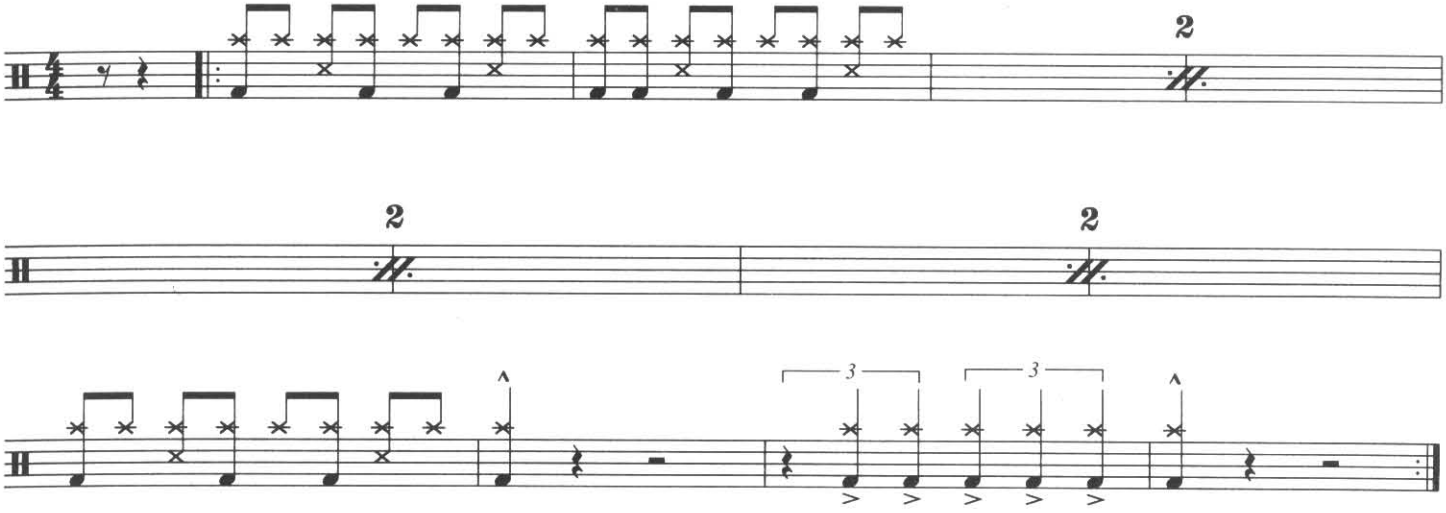
JB, on the other hand, stayed in the best and most expensive hotels available, and in later years, usually traveled in his personal Learjet. Gertrude Sanders, James's wardrobe mistress explains, "We stay in different hotels because you know, with him, he has to be the prestige. He don't be stayin' with the band."

Picasso had his "Blue" period, Miles Davis had his "Cool" period, and James Brown had his "Melvin Parker" period. Melvin joined the band a month before the "Out of Sight" session. JB had been pursuing him for more than a year but Melvin remained steadfast, deciding to continue his college studies in history and economics. He also had plans to start a band in his hometown of Greensboro, North Carolina with a saxophonist named Maceo—who just happened to be his brother. When Brown again came knocking in the spring of '64, Melvin relented, agreeing to work with him on one condition: brother Maceo had to come along too. In need of a baritone sax at the time, James Brown agreed.

Their impact was immediate and profound. Melvin was much more of a groove player than his forerunners; and in Maceo, James Brown found his featured soloist. (Although starting out on baritone, Maceo was quickly shifted over to tenor once JB heard him blow.) Unfortunately, Melvin's tenure was cut short by the draft, as both he and his brother entered the armed services a little more than a year after they initially joined the band. Maceo would return a few years later, but Melvin's hiatus from the band would last until the end of the decade. He would come back in the spring of 1969 and then depart once again after less than a year.

Regardless of his short-term occupancy of James Brown's drum chair, Melvin's influence lasts to this day. He made the cross-stick a staple of the James Brown Sound while elevating the concept of the drum-bass lock to a higher plane of emotion and precision. His most important contributions are found in three consecutive blues hits: "Out of Sight," "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," and "I Got You." Following the boss's theme-and-variations treatment of these three tunes, Melvin uses the basic drum groove in "Out Of Sight" as a jumping off point for the two songs that would follow. By adding new and increasingly complex elements to the hi-hat and kick drum figures in each succeeding tune, Melvin creates a "how to" manual on the art of the cross-stick. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 130)



SAM THOMAS •bass•

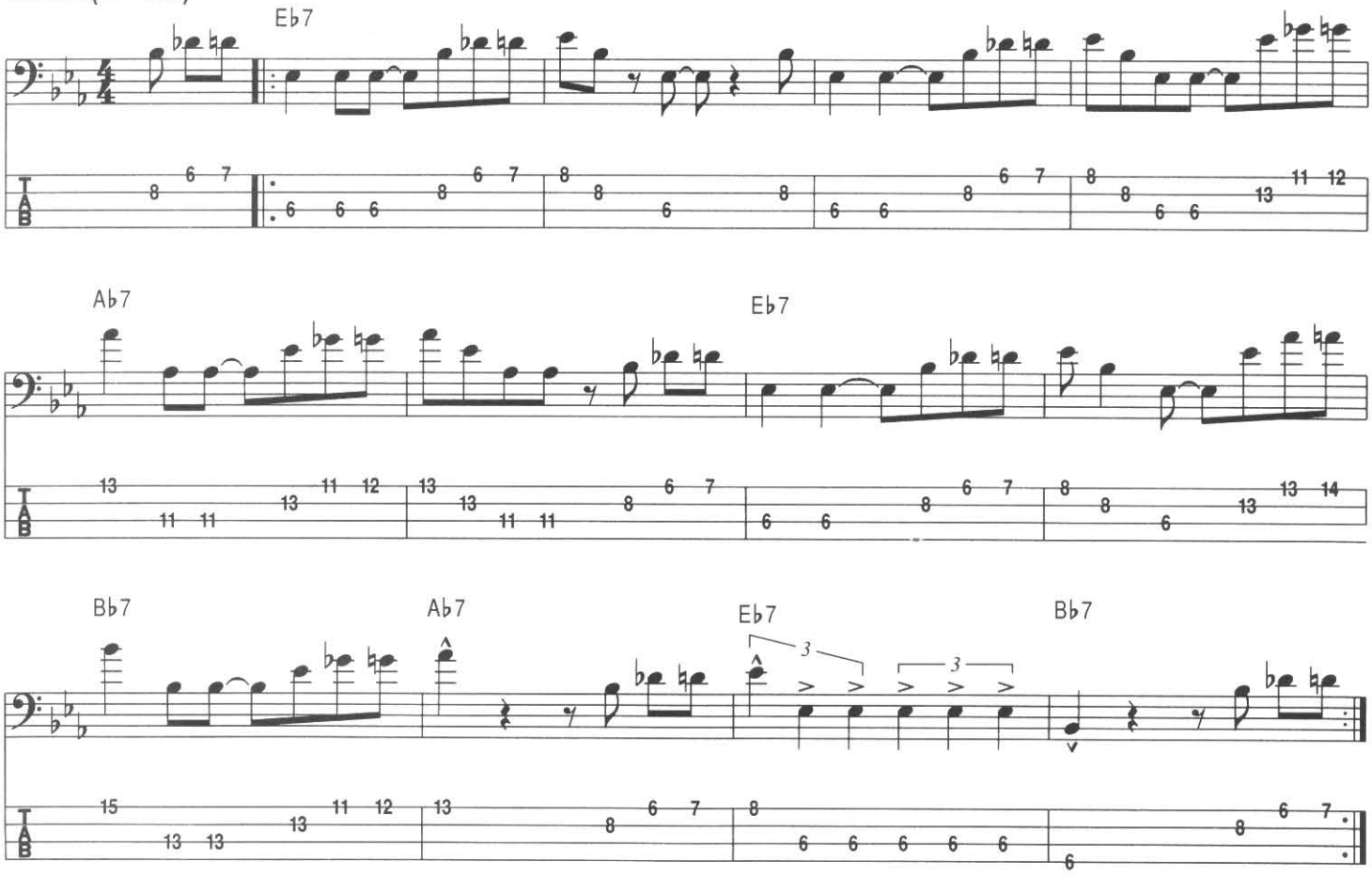
CD 1 12 TRACKING

Even though Bernard Odum had regained first-chair status in the bass department, he wasn't the only bassist in James Brown's entourage when "Out of Sight" was recorded. Shortly after Hubert Perry left the band in the summer of '63, JB added a bass player from Washington, D.C. named Sam Thomas. Arriving in September, Sam shared the bass chores with Bernard for eight months while waiting for his shot to play on a hit record. Apparently, he picked up a few tricks from Bernard during his break-in period. Sam's "Out of Sight" bass lines take the same high register route as Odum did in 1960's "Think." Further evidence of Bernard's influence is Sam's consistent use of the same rhythmic figure that was the building block of the "Think" bass line—the anticipated eighth-note on the "and" of beat "two," tied over to a grouping of four eighth-notes on beats "three" and "four."

But James Brown didn't hire Sam Thomas to just mimic Bernard Odum. Sam had his own ideas to contribute, and one of them played a large role in creating an unprecedented level of precision and tightness in the rhythm section. "Out of Sight" is the first important marriage of the kick drum to a bass part on a James Brown recording. Sam Thomas's bass lines are carefully sculpted to reflect the offbeat kick drum accents being played by Melvin Parker. During the bands early period, this relationship was minimal, as each instrument basically pursued its own pattern. If the parts met up, that was cool. If they didn't, that was OK too. In "Out of Sight," we see a more inter-dependent relationship between the two instruments.

The fingerings found in the bass tablature from this tune give you a time capsule look at the state of the instrument in 1964. Bassists from this period played flatwound strings. The significance of this practice goes way past the obvious tonal difference. These strings had a lot to do with the way that bassists approached the instrument, particularly in terms of fingerings. Flatwound strings are much more forgiving when executing large intervallic leaps and position shifts. The smooth finish of these strings results in reduced friction against fingers, and consequently, less string noise. Wide jumps on the neck become relatively seamless. A modern bassist playing on roundwound strings would probably finger this tune differently to avoid the large position shifts moving into the IV and V chords. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 130)



Les Buie's growing disenchantment with life on the road eventually closed out the "formative years" chapter of the James Brown guitar legacy. In December 1964, he left the band and settled in California, taking with him one of the more distinctive and recognizable components of the band's early '60s sound. As important as his contributions were to the development of James Brown's early recorded catalog, Les personally has received little recognition among music historians and has generally been overshadowed by some of the more visible and celebrated JB guitarists that followed him.

Typical of his understated style and team-oriented work ethic, his guitar work on "Out of Sight"—one of his last important recording sessions for James Brown—looks to be a simple, run-of-the-mill backbeat part. But looks can be deceiving. Taken by itself, two eighth-note staccato guitar chords on beat "two" are nothing to write home about. However, a closer view of the overall picture reveals these two guitar chords as an ingenious, multi-faceted, rhythmic element that ties all the other instruments together. They reinforce Bobby Byrd's organ part and make it more driving, they punctuate the phrasing of Bernard Odum's bass lines, and they also take part in a call-and-response conversation with the sax section's lines. Les wasn't thinking about any of this when he cut his part. He just instinctively played what he felt, and he apparently felt pretty good in May of '64. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 130)

chapter 4

PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG, PT. 1

recorded february, 1965

"This is a hit!!" No it wasn't—at least not in the eyes of King Records' Syd Nathan. The original version of the tune should have been called "Papa's Got A Brand New Drag." James Brown's optimistic exhortation at the beginning of the master tape seemed to be nothing more than false confidence and bluster. This track was recorded in under an hour by a dog-tired band passing through Charlotte, North Carolina on the way to a gig in another city. Their fatigue showed. The track was deemed too slow for King's purposes and had to be sped up (which changed the original key of E♭ to E natural).

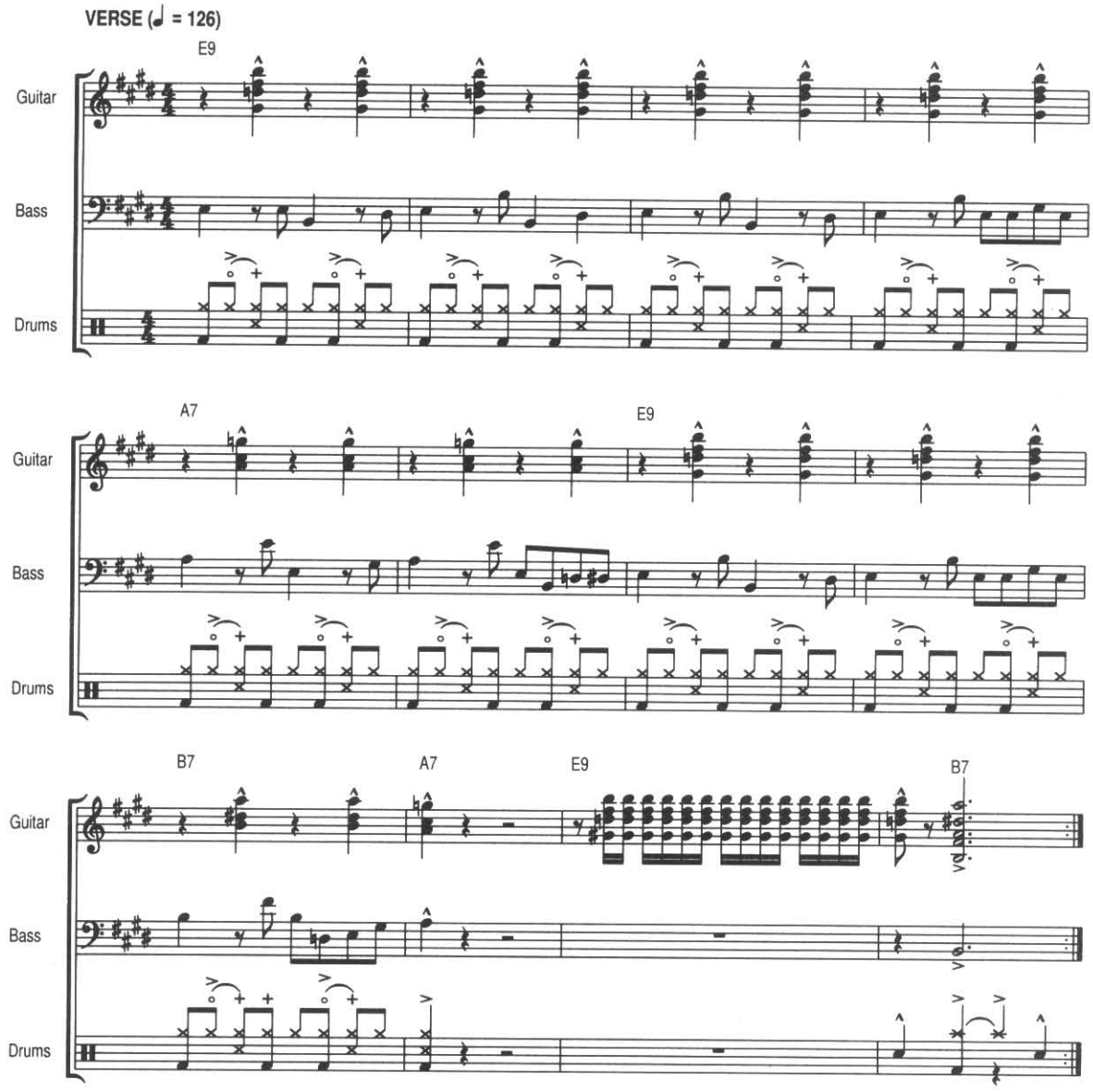
That's just the beginning of the story. The original master was also 7 minutes long, featured two different Maceo Parker sax solos, suffered from EQ problems, and was dry as a bone ambience-wise. Nathan's blunt, initial reaction to the tune left no doubt in anyone's mind as to how he felt about it. He threw the acetate on the floor and bellowed, "My God, I can't put that out!" After two solid days of editing, re-EQing, and adding additional reverb and echo to the original master, Brown's indomitable vision was still wrong. It wasn't a hit. It was a *monster* hit. ◆

© Don Paulsen/Michael Ochs Archives/Venice, CA

On stage at the Apollo, 1964
L to R: Bobby Bennett, "Baby" Lloyd Stallworth, Bobby Byrd, Melvin Parker, Maceo Parker, and St. Clair Pinckney.

PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG, PT. 1 •master score•

CD I 14 TRACKING

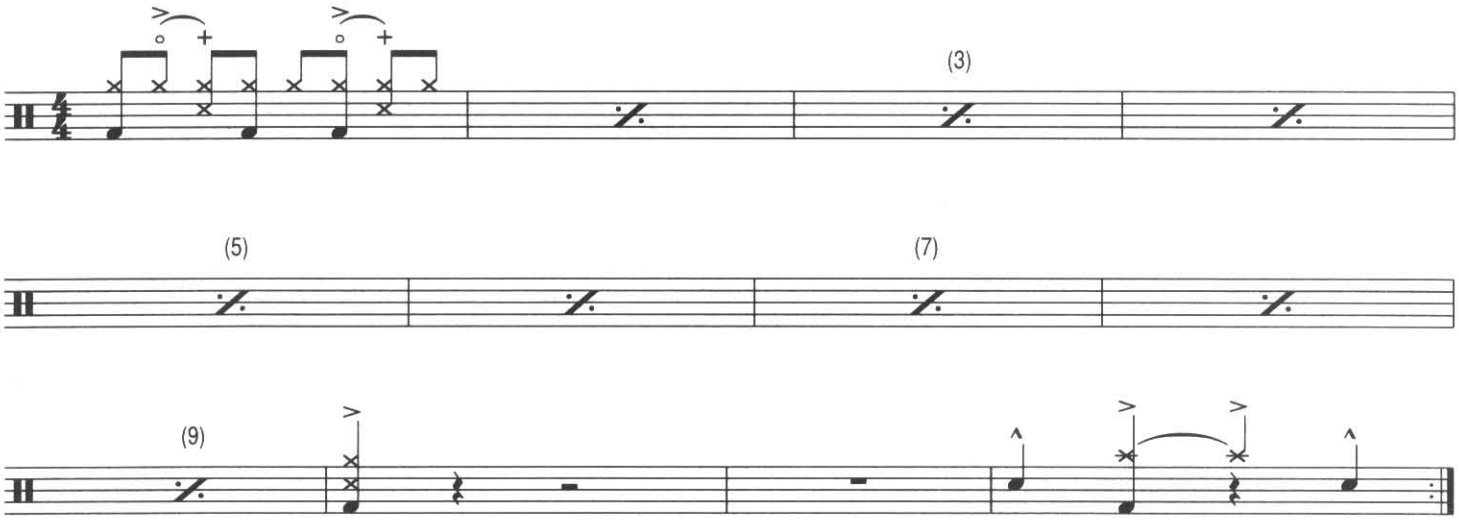


In chapter two of the Melvin Parker cross-stick trilogy, we find the same basic drum pattern as on "Out of Sight" except he switches over from his ride cymbal to the hi-hat. This opens the door for one of Melvin's most important innovations. On "Think," "Good Good Lovin'," "Bewildered," and the majority of James Brown's other early hi-hat based grooves, the "hats" were tightly closed. The few exceptions like the swing pattern in "Tell Me What I Did Wrong," the triplet-based cymbal work of "Please Please Please," and the shuffle on "Mashed Potatoes" were drastically different from the metronomic eighth-note, open-and-closed pattern that Melvin pioneers in this tune.

"Tell Me What I Did Wrong's" swing style hi-hat opens on the downbeats of "one" and "three." The other two tunes feature open-and-closed figures in the same "and-two" and "and-four" context as "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," but the feel of the eighth-notes is completely different, and these parts didn't have to work against the upbeat accents of a syncopated kick drum pattern. The earlier kick drum style of these tunes emphasized downbeats, so there were no problems with independence of hands and feet.

When you look at the master score of "Papa," you can see how essential these upbeat kick drum notes are. They are the sole source of the funk on this track. Sam Thomas's bass part is a cleverly disguised root-fifth cocktail type of approach that emphasizes the downbeats of "one" and "three." Jimmy Nolen's chopped guitar chords emphasize the downbeats of "two" and "four." Even the horn figures revolve around downbeats. If Melvin hadn't injected some upbeat syncopation into this track, the end result would have been a groove similar to the version of "Tie A Yellow Ribbon 'Round The Old Oak Tree" that you hear at bar mitzvahs. The tension between Melvin's upbeat approach and everyone else's straight feel is what makes this groove sizzle. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 126)



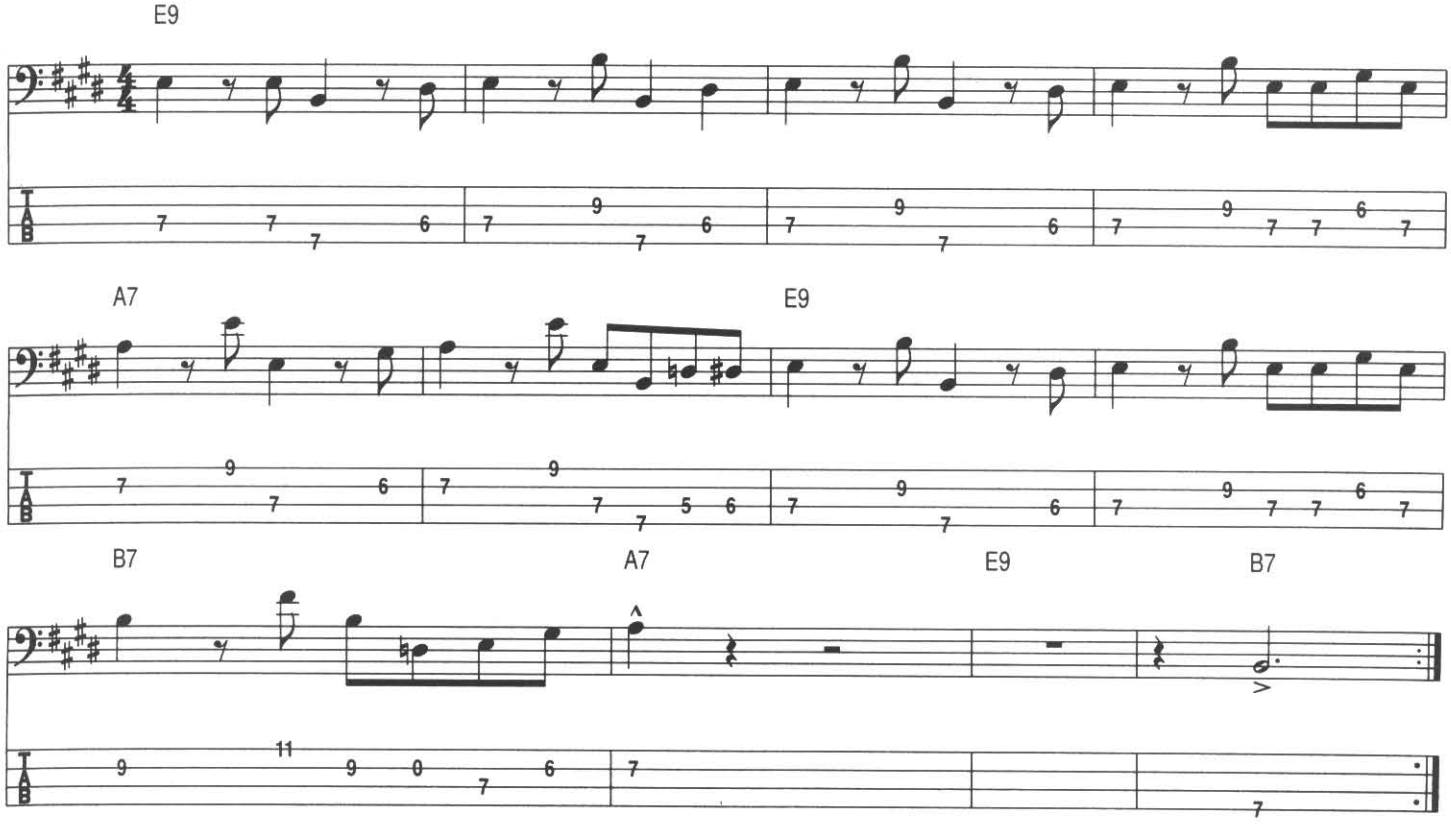
CD 1 16 TRACKING

As solid and immovable as Melvin Parker is on this track, James Brown has always felt that the real control on this tune came from Sam Thomas's bass. He also looked at the fatigue factor as a plus. If the band had been fresh when they cut the tune, the feel would have probably been more on top of the beat. Close your eyes when listening to the seven-minute, original tempo version of "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" and you can almost see a bleary-eyed Sam Thomas struggling to make it to the next downbeat on every phrase, and somehow pulling it off at the last millisecond—every time! Musicians spend their entire lives trying to capture this feel.

Tired or not, Sam didn't take the easy way out. You figure he would have played it safe by laying down a nice, easy-to-play, root-fifth part. Instead, he plays a nice, pain-in-the-ass, root-fifth part. It's not that it's so technically difficult or physically demanding to play. It's just that there's always some oddball intervallic leap or half-step approach note that screws up what would have been a very simple fingering. Within the scope of the present day, guitar-style fingerings that many bassists employ, the technical aspect of this bass part is no big deal. Start off with your second finger on the seventh fret of the "A" string, employ one finger per fret (from the sixth through ninth frets) and everything lays right under your hand. The only significant shift occurs in the B7th measure.

But you have to look at Sam Thomas's lines in the context of the state of bass playing when this track was recorded. In early '65, the electric bass was barely ten years old and many of its practitioners were converted upright players. Root-fifth patterns were played with the first and fourth fingers, which meant that Sam would have been playing the majority of "Papa" at the seventh fret position with the first finger constantly reaching back out of position to grab all the D♯ and G♯ approach notes. Of course Sam wasn't really worried about how this part would lay in a transcription book thirty years later. He obviously had no trouble playing it at the time it was recorded. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 126)



JIMMY NOLEN •guitar•

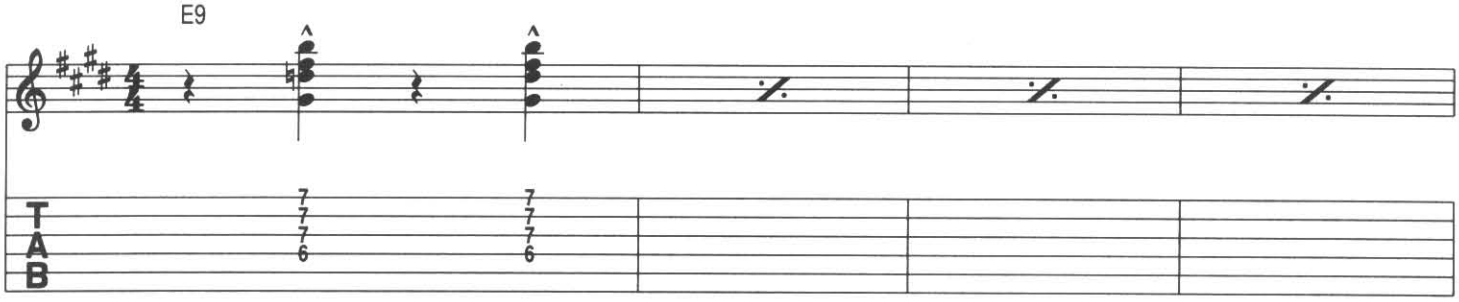
CD 1 17 TRACKING

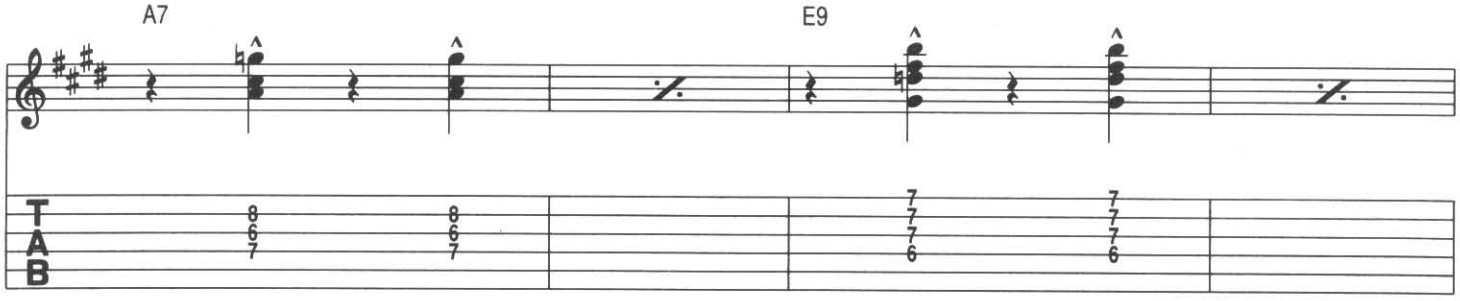
Talk about first impressions! It's Jimmy Nolen's debut on a James Brown session and he bores you to death in the first ten bars of this tune with some mundane backbeat chord voicings. Then all of a sudden, WHAM!!! In the eleventh and twelfth bars, he hits you with one of the most recognizable guitar parts in the history of popular music. A guitar lick that can define an entire song is a rare and beautiful thing. Nolen's jangly E9th chord ranks right up there with "Satisfaction," "My Girl," "Soul Man," and other guitar hook classics. That 9th chord voicing and Jimmy Nolen would become synonymous, as they would appear in almost every James Brown song cut in the next five years.

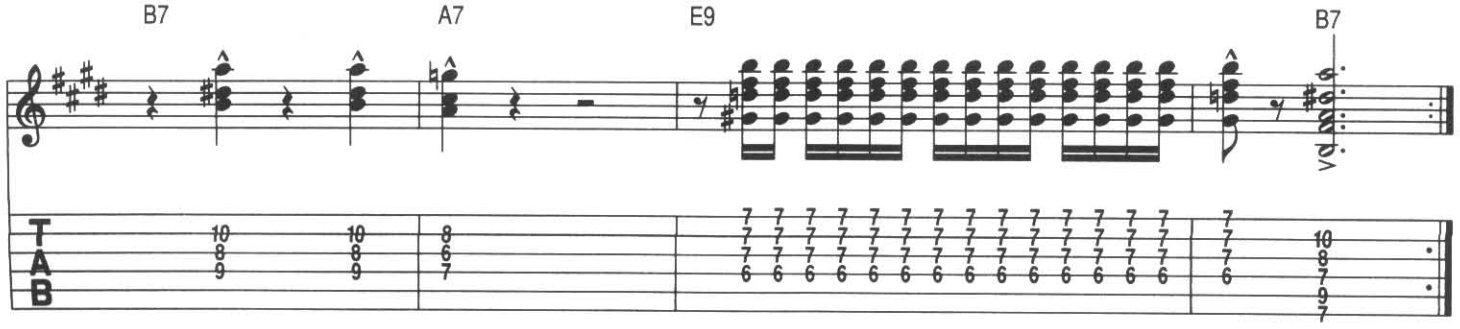
Nolen, a veteran of the '50s West Coast blues scene, was no stranger to recording studios. He had cut a handful of sides for the Federal and Specialty labels before replacing Pete "Guitar" Lewis in the Johnny Otis Show. (Jimmy is the guitarist on "Willie And The Hand Jive.") Born in Oklahoma City, Jimmy had arrived on the West Coast after several years of playing the R&B circuits in Tulsa and Wichita, Kansas. L.D. Williams, one of James Brown's sax players, had played with Nolen in the early '60s and recommended him for the guitar chair when road-weary Les Buie quit in December of '64. Jimmy's strong blues and soloing background seemed to be the initial enticement for Brown, but the "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" session convinced him that his new guitarist's unique rhythmic concept was an even bigger asset.

The key to strumming Jimmy's signature lick is to keep your wrist and the grip on your pick very loose. If you tighten up, there will be too much pick-to-string resistance to get a seamless, balanced sound. And let me make an apology to the much maligned backbeats of the first paragraph. Playing them is not as easy as it may appear to be. A proper R&B backbeat requires that the chord is instantly deadened by releasing left hand finger pressure. If the chord rings out, you blew the percussive effect. Time—the second aspect of a good guitar backbeat—is equally challenging. If the chord disappears into the attack with the snare drum, you're in the pocket. (Hopefully, your drummer's time is good.) If it sticks out a little on either side because you're rushing or you're late, you wind up in flam city and you've weakened the groove. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 126)







chapter 5

I GOT YOU (I FEEL GOOD)

recorded may, 1965

When the Godfather tells you the song isn't funky enough, you better pull up a chair, take out your pad and pencil and listen up. The original September 1964 version of "I Got You" was inspired by "Devil's Den," an organ-based instrumental shuffle that JB had cut the previous year. When a legal dispute between King Records and the Smash label halted the first release of "I Got You," it gave James Brown some time to rethink his groove.

Eight months later, in the early spring of '65, bandleader Nat Jones was roused from a sound sleep by his insomniac boss's raspy voice and told, "Nat, this song is too hip. It's too sharp. We're taking some of the funk out of it and making it too jazz. The groove is really laid back funk." The new edition of the song came to life shortly thereafter in Miami's Criteria studio. No one in their right mind would say the first version wasn't funky, but then again, geniuses like James Brown are rarely in their "right mind." The second version made the prototype sound as if it were a foxtrot.

"I Got You" was the start of a new era and the end of another one. James had become the biggest R&B draw in the country, and Syd Nathan had rewarded him with a lucrative new recording contract that allowed him much more artistic freedom. His act was no longer referred to as "James Brown and his Band." His sidemen would now be referred to as an "orchestra," and their ranks would soon swell, with an influx of veteran jazz and blues musicians. James and Co. would also reluctantly say goodbye to an old friend that had served them well. "I Got You" was their farewell to the blues. Modality and one-chord funk jams loomed in the future. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 148)

D7

Guitar

Bass

Drums

G7 D7

Guitar

Bass

Drums

A7 G7 D9

Guitar

Bass

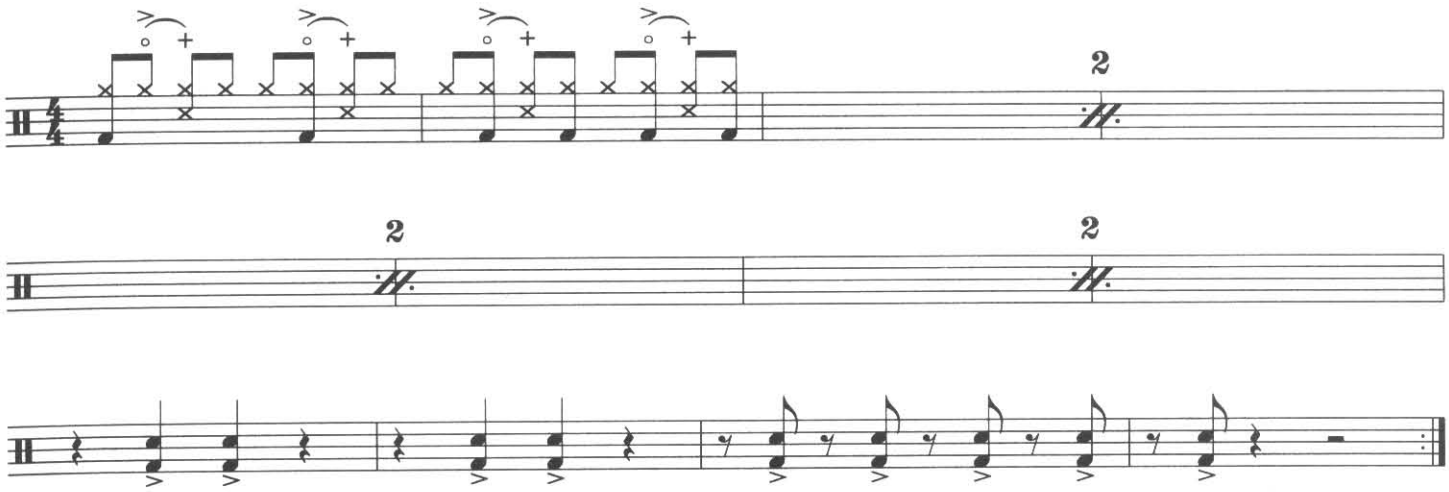
Drums

This is the most intense and complex drum beat that Melvin would lay down for James Brown. It would also be his last for quite a while. Uncle Sam was calling. Was it the awareness that he was about to be demoted from Captain Cross-Stick to Private Parker that led him to play his heart out on this track? It's hard to say, but you can tell he intended to make his mark before he walked out the door.

The earlier, prototype version of this tune was faster, and Melvin featured the ride cymbal instead of the hi-hat. The cross-stick pattern was the same in both editions, but somewhere in the eight months between the two sessions, the kick drum figure was reborn. Melvin lays down a steady diet of upbeats in the verse and takes the concept even further in the drum break leading to the bridge. It was almost as if he were laying down a friendly challenge to his successors: "Let's see you out funk this!"

(Note: The squeaky bass drum pedal heard in this tune is typical of the speed with which songs were cut by James Brown. In a present-day session, the engineer and techies might kill an hour oiling and mechanically reworking the pedal, or they'd replace it if necessary. If that didn't work, they'd try to correct the problem with a noise gate or some other sleight-of-hand studio trick. James couldn't be bothered with small, irrelevant details like these. He was looking at the bigger picture.) ◆

VERSE (♩ = 148)



DRUM BREAK (RECORDED ONLY IN THE DRUM LESSON)

play on bell of ride cymbal

DAVID "HOOKS" WILLIAMS •bass•

Like ships in the night, hundreds of nameless and faceless musicians have passed through James Brown's camp over the years, all with the same dream—to play on one of his important hits. David "Hooks" Williams was one of the luckier ones. Not only did he get the chance to play on a significant record—he wound up playing on what many consider to be *the* most important James Brown hit. David joined the band just in time to record "I Got You." Over the years, his solitary recorded masterpiece has become one of the most misquoted bass lines in the history of the instrument. I guarantee you, nine out of ten bassists play "D" to "C" natural on the D7th chord change and "G" to "F" natural on the G7th. It's a bit tough to hear, but the two notes David Williams is alternating between are actually a *half* step apart—not a *whole* step. The correct pitches are D to C♯ and and G to F♯.

For the clue to this sonic mystery, don't look to the rhythm section. Listen to the horns. They're moving back and forth between D7th and C♯7th voicings against the I chord, and alternating G7th and F♯7th against the IV chord. David is just accommodating them by supplying the roots. Throughout this song, the bass is constantly shifting its allegiance back and forth between the horn section and the rhythm section. Maybe "Hooks" should have been paid double scale, since he's wearing two hats on this track.

Williams is remembered as being more of a jazz bassist than the rest of the predominantly blues and R&B bass players James Brown carried at the time. Before moving on in the summer of 1966, he got the chance to show off that side of his musical personality when he also played on a JB instrumental for Smash Records appropriately entitled "Hooks." ◆

VERSE (♩ = 148)

D7 2

G7 D7

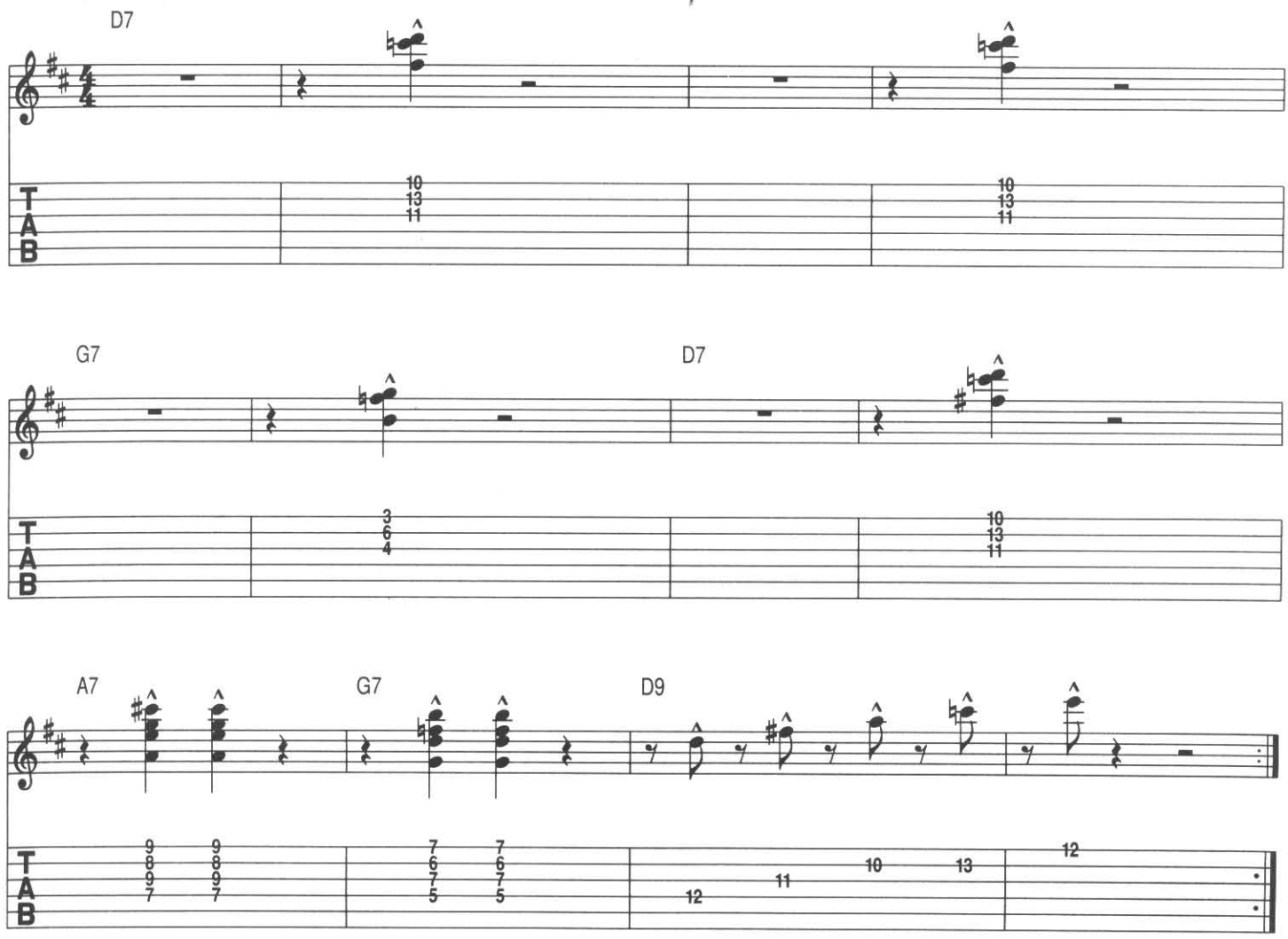
A7 G7 D9

CD 1 21 TRACKING

You're looking at the most celebrated D9th arpeggio in the history of popular music. In each of the arrangements in James Brown's three-song, blues trilogy, the band gave a different look to each of the instrumental hooks that happened in the eleventh and twelfth bars. In "Out of Sight," it was quarter-note triplet chords; in "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," Jimmy Nolen stole the show with his sixteenth-note, E9th strumming pattern. In the final chapter, "I Got You" takes a much more linear direction. The last two bars of this tune feature the entire band absolutely crushing five notes in unison ("D," "F♯," "A," "C," and "E"). Unlike the previous two blues jams, the band doesn't return to the V chord in the twelfth bar. They remain on the I chord harmony and leave everyone hanging on the last note of their D9th arpeggio.

Jimmy may have been just a face in the crowd in bars eleven and twelve, but in the first eight measures of "I Got You," a prudent and critical decision on his part played a huge role in the band's overall groove. Jimmy avoided a standard "two" and "four" backbeat pattern so as not to interfere with the horn line. By just playing an accented chord on the second beat of every other measure, he allows the horn figure to have its space. Once the horn players have had their say, he puts in his rhythmic two cents, solidifies the rhythm section, and waits for the next repeat of the phrase. This goes much deeper than the old "less is more" axiom. If Jimmy had played a typical "two" and "four" backbeat pattern, the song would have been subtitled "I Feel Bad." ◆

VERSE (♩ = 148)



chapter 6

DON'T BE A DROPOUT

recorded august, 1966

For whatever reason, throughout his career James Brown has felt the need every so often to send out a message to his band to let them know who's boss. Get up out of your drum seat to go to the bathroom in the middle of a recording session, and James jumps on the set himself and cuts the track before the stunned musician returns. Receive the rare honor and opportunity of flying with JB in his private Lear jet (instead of riding the bus), show up late to the sound check because you're with *him* (and he's late), and you receive a fine. "There are no exceptions to the rules," the bewildered band member is told. As a close friend of James Brown's commented in his autobiography, "The more you try to tell him he needs you, the more he's going to try and prove he doesn't."

Whether he was posturing once again or he was searching for a different sound that he felt his own band could not deliver, Brown returned to his studio musician bag in late '65 and early '66. Teaming up with arranger Sammy Lowe and a lineup of New York session notables including drummer Bernard "Pretty" Purdie and guitarist Billy Butler, Brown recorded the hard-swinging "Ain't That A Groove" and a heavily orchestrated version of "It's A Man's Man's Man's World." At the same time, the loss of the Parkers and a few other key band members motivated JB to revamp his personal orchestra with new blood. Most notable were saxophonist and future bandleader Alfred "Pee Wee" Ellis, and an inspirational new drummer named John "Jab'o" Starks, who was fresh off a six-year stint with blues legend Bobby "Blue" Bland. ("Jab'o" had played on prominent Bobby "Blue" Bland recordings like "Turn On Your Lovelight," "That's The Way Love Is," and "Stormy Monday Blues.")

By the time James Brown recorded "Don't Be A Dropout," he was in the midst of much more than just the rebirth of his band; it was the rebirth of his entire image. A by-product of the overwhelming success he had enjoyed with "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag" and "I Got You" was an almost god-like status in the African-American community. With his new-found political clout and the added support of Vice President Hubert Humphrey, James made this song his personal crusade against the low high-school graduation rate that plagued America's inner city youth. ◆

Courtesy of Alan Leeds

L to R: James Brown, Nat Jones, Bernard Odum, "Jab'o" Starks.

DON'T BE A DROPOUT •master score•

CD 1 22 TRACKING

VERSE (♩ = 116)

C7 G7 F7 G7 C9 Play 4 times

Guitar

Bass

Drums

CHORUS

1. 2. Back to Verse

C7 G7 F7 G7 C9 G7 C9

Guitar

Bass

Drums

JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

CD 1 23 TRACK

This is great drumming but it's not "Jab'o" Starks. I mean... that is "Jab'o" playing on the track, but the origin of this "four on the floor" kick and snare drum pattern comes from a region 1,000 miles north of Mobile. This is a flat-out Benny Benjamin inspired Motown drum beat. You can't blame "Jab'o" or James Brown for adding this groove to their repertoire. In 1966, the airwaves of the world were ruled by the Temptations, the Supremes, The Four Tops, and all the rest of Berry Gordy's stable of Detroit stars.

"Jab'o" was seduced by this same beat a few months earlier when he cut "Money Won't Change You," but to him, incorporating other drummers' beats is nothing to be ashamed about; it's the natural progression of the musical process. "I don't get hung up on labels," he explains. "I try to take it all in and learn and grow from everything I hear." A few tracks down the road, that natural progression would lead musicians all over the world to learn and grow through him. ◆

VERSE AND CHORUS (♩ = 116)

Vamp

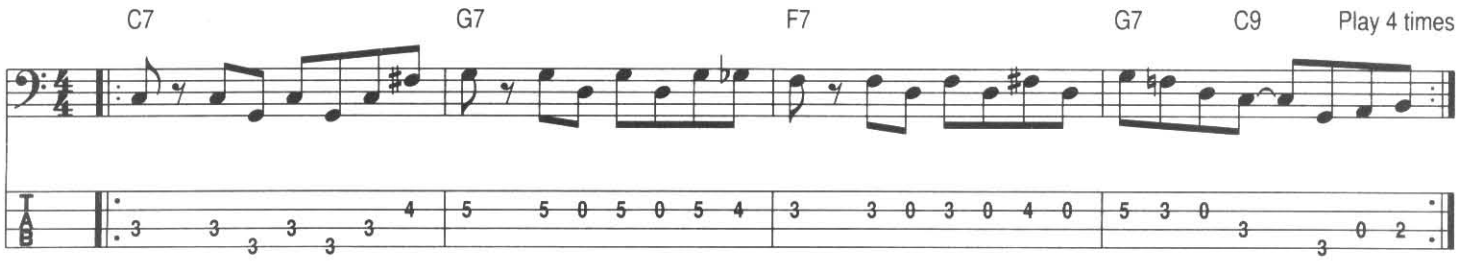
ALFONZO "COUNTRY" KELLUM •bass•

CD 1 24 TRACK

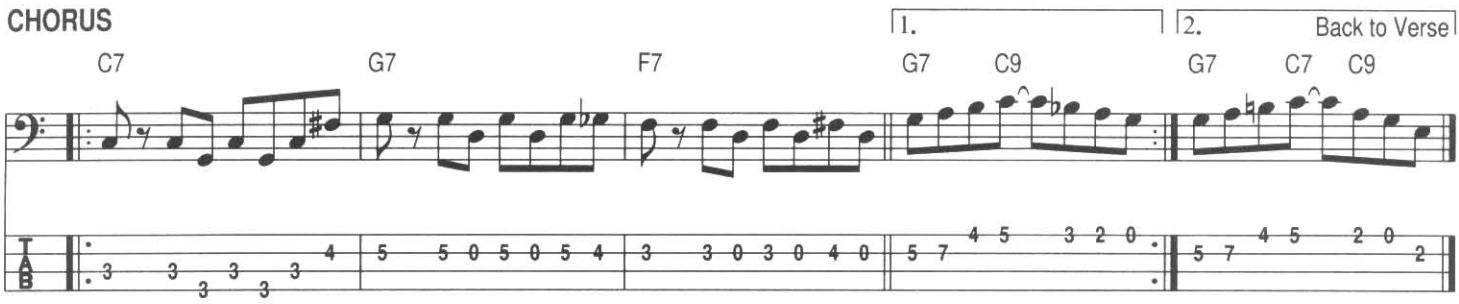
The relentless intensity of "Jab'o" Starks's drum pattern demanded an equal emotional commitment from the bass player. This insistent eighth-note pattern leaves no doubt that the challenge was met. The question as to who played it is another matter. Bernard Odum is listed as the bassist for this session, but Alfonzo "Country" Kellum swears he played the bass part on this tune. "I was in a club band called Jimmy Smith and the Imperials before I joined up with James in late '63," explains "Country." "I broke in as a backup bassist, but then he heard me playing the guitar one day in the dressing room and he switched me over."

"Country's" claim to this bass performance is well founded. The bass line to "Dropout" is devoid of the usual large intervals and leaps that are typical of Bernard Odum's style, and the fourth measure of every four-bar phrase is much more of a step-wise, scalar approach than anything we've seen from Bernard to date. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 116)



CHORUS

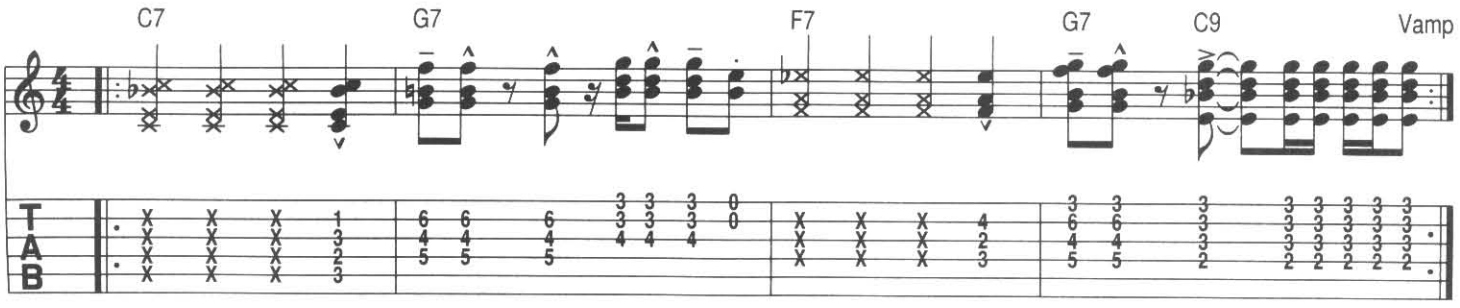


JIMMY NOLEN •guitar•

CD 1 25 TRACK

The overwhelming solidity of the drum and bass groove on "Dropout" makes Jimmy Nolen's job a breeze. He can either join up with them as they pulverize the straight-eighth and quarter-notes into the ground, or he can play off of this rock-solid foundation and syncopate a bit more. Jimmy opted for the best of both worlds. In measures one and three of this four-bar pattern, locking up with the kick and snare drums, quarter-notes reinforces the power of the rhythm section. In the second and fourth bars, he departs from this practice by emphasizing and playing off of the upbeats. Predating the signature lick of Kool & The Gang guitarist Charles Smith by almost a decade, Jimmy ends each four-bar phrase with a "Hollywood Swinging" style dominant 9th chord strumming pattern. ◆

VERSE AND CHORUS (♩ = 116)



chapter 7

COLD SWEAT, PT. 1

recorded may, 1967

With the exception of the great white shark and the African crocodile, the most territorial creature on the face of the Earth is James Brown. Step on his turf and he doesn't get mad—he gets funky. Both Wilson Pickett and Dyke and The Blazers found this out the hard way when they had the audacity to come into Soul Brother #1's kitchen with their respective versions of "Funky Broadway." They immediately fell victim to a sonic avalanche called "Cold Sweat" and were knocked off the charts.

The lyrics were inspired by an old blues tune JB had recorded in 1962 called "I Don't Care," but the groove came from a futuristic dimension of sound and emotion that he had just begun to explore. The first of the great James Brown modal tunes, "Cold Sweat" reduced the importance of pitch and elevated the status of rhythm. Born out of the fusion of a James Brown bass line grunted to "Pee Wee" Ellis in a backstage dressing room, a Miles Davis "So What" horn vamp, and the arrival of Clyde Stubblefield, the king of all fatback drummers, this track instantly struck fear in the hearts of R&B musicians across the world. Someone had just blown past their Oldsmobile with a Maserati. ◆

© Frank Cupelli/Michael Ochs Archives/Venice, CA

James Brown live at the Latin Casino, Cherry Hill, NJ, 1967.
Musicians include "Jab'o" Starks, bandleader Nat Jones, Clyde Stubblefield, Bernard Odum, and St. Clair Pinckney.

VERSE (♩ = 118)

D Dorian (vamp)

Vamp

Guitar 1

mute all notes

(See guitar lesson for Gtr. 1 variation)

Guitar 2

mute indicated notes with left hand so that practically no pitch is sounded, only a percussive attack.

Bass

Drums

LAST TIME GOING TO BRIDGE

D Dorian

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

BRIDGE

C7

F9

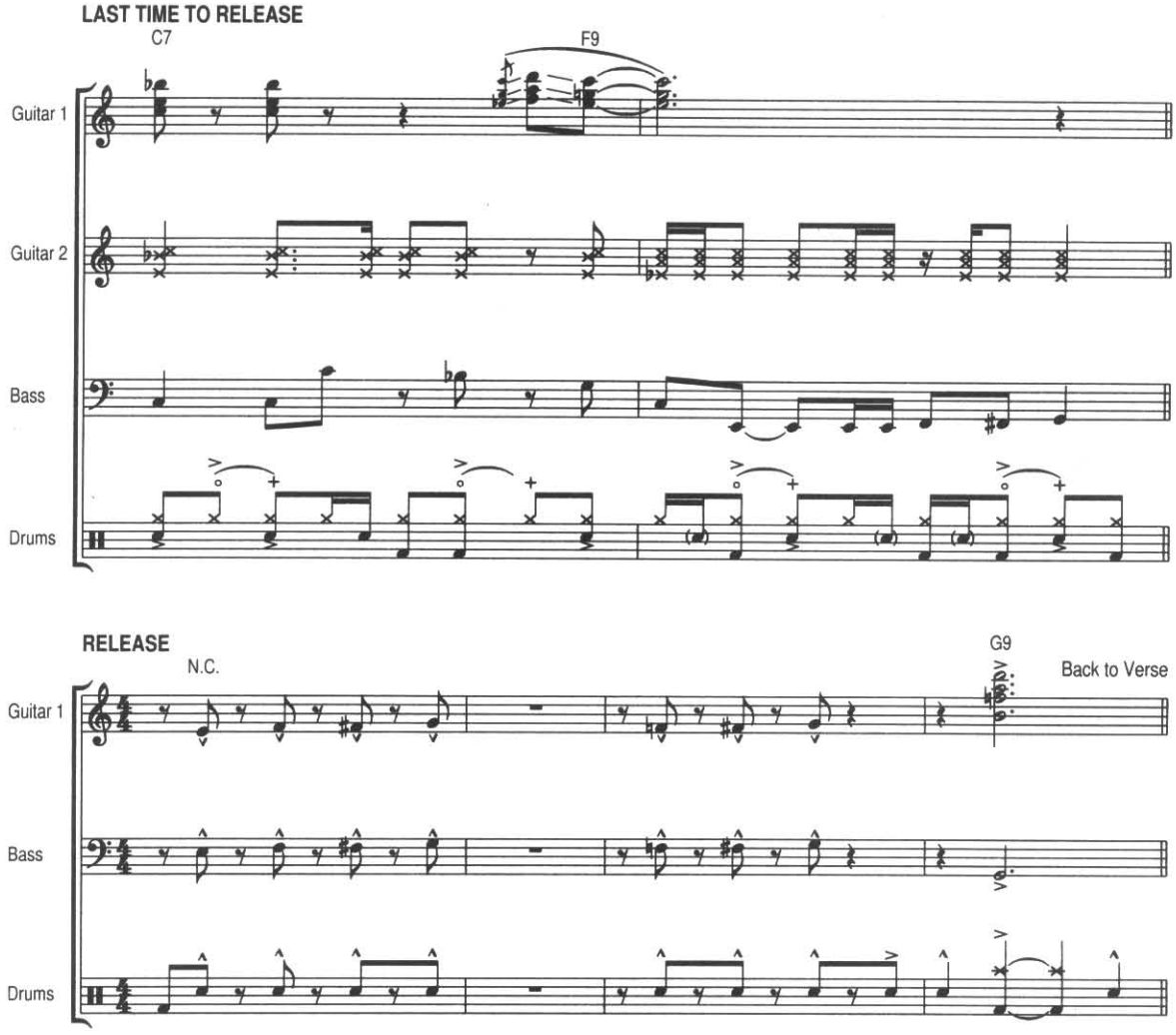
Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums


LAST TIME TO RELEASE
C7
F9
Guitar 1
Guitar 2
Bass
Drums
RELEASE
N.C.
G9
Back to Verse
Guitar 1
Bass
Drums

KING
K-12403
DYNATONE (BMI)
TIME: 2:55
45-
6110
HIGH
FIDELITY
COLD SWEAT - PART 1
JAMES BROWN And
The FAMOUS FLAMES

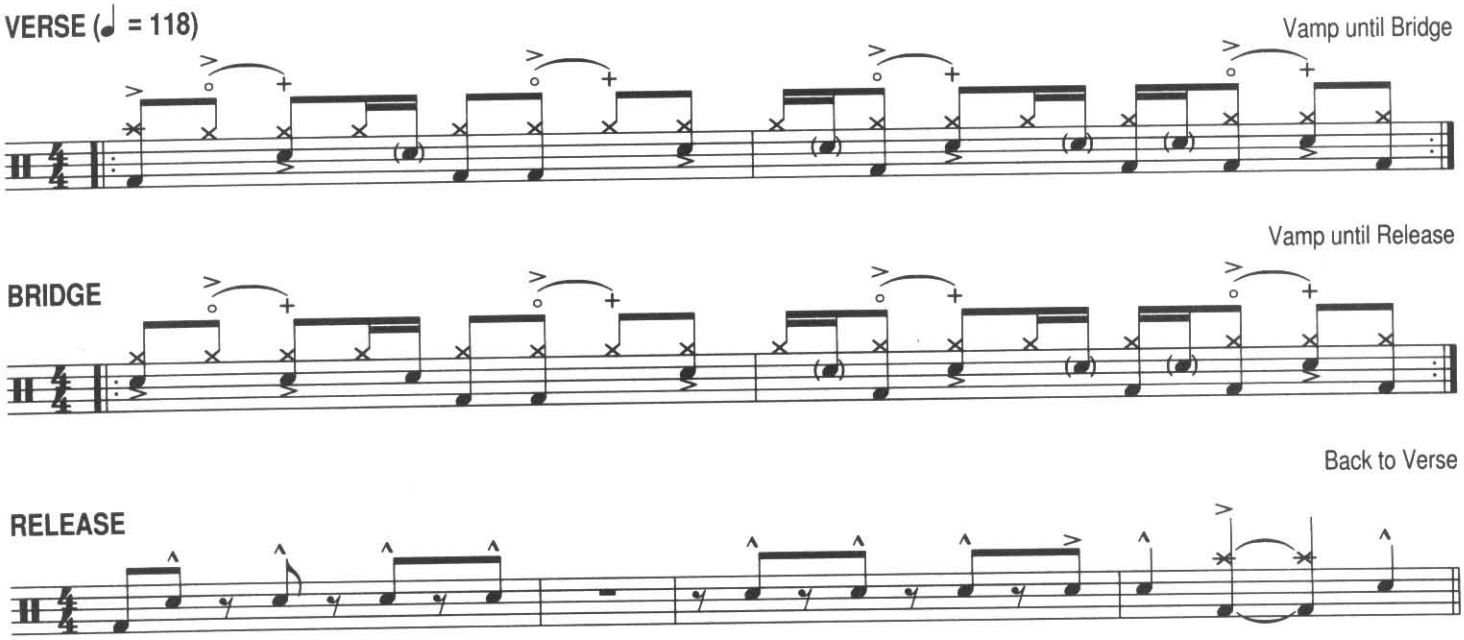
CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD •drums•

CD 1 26 TRACK

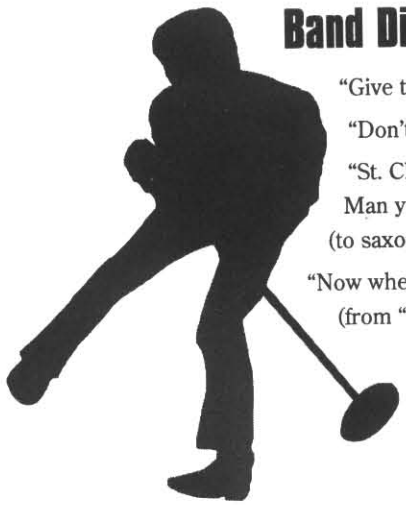
By the late '60s, the musical phrase "Give the drummer some!" had become the cliche of cliches amongst musicians. It was the musical equivalent of showing up at a party and dropping Steve Martin's old "Excuse me!" line, or trying to imitate the "wild and crazy guys" of *Saturday Night Live's* late '70s shows. Every soul band in the civilized world automatically incorporated the routine into their acts. Unfortunately, 99.9% of them would not be able to name the person whose overwhelming musical presence brought about the creation of this phrase.

James Brown had used many drummers before "Cold Sweat," but he never felt the need to relinquish his spotlight to this instrument until Clyde Stubblefield came on the scene. (Clyde actually joined the band in late '65, but "Cold Sweat" was his first recorded hit.) At the 4:26 mark of the full length recording just after JB says, "You got it drummer," a major seismic event reverberated down to the earth's core: Clyde Stubblefield began his celebrated minute and thirty second "Cold Sweat" drum solo. In total contrast to his boss's healthy ego—and in keeping with the modest nature of most of James Brown's sidemen—Clyde downplayed his importance when speaking with Harry Weinger, telling him, "I just sit down and strike up something that goes along with what's going down."

"What's going down" is drum innovation of the highest order, and funk's equivalent to the power drumming of John Bonham. Ghosted snares, displacing the backbeat on "four" from the downbeat to the upbeat, avoiding the downbeat of "one" with the bass drum... all happening under a complex open-and-closed hi-hat pattern. Have mercy Clyde! For most of us mortals, this is obviously *not* sight reading material. Go slowly through the various levels and don't try to take it all in at once. You may even have to work just one measure at a time before you can play the patterns in their original form. ◆



Band Directions—Godfather Style Pt. 1



"Give the drummer some." (from "Cold Sweat")

"Don't Play So Much, Unh! Don't Be So Mean." (from "Get It Together")

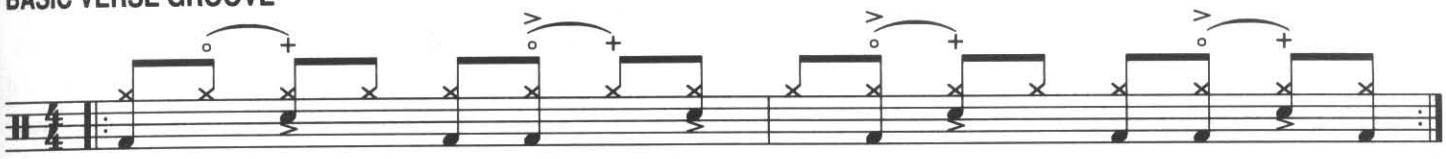
"St. Clair, I'm not gonna' ask'n you to play Jack 'cause your horn is too big. Man you got too much horn over there."
(to saxophonist St. Clair Pinckney in "Get It Together")

"Now when I say 'unh' one time, you say 'unh.' Ready? ONE TIME, UNH!"
(from "Get It Together")

DRUM LESSON

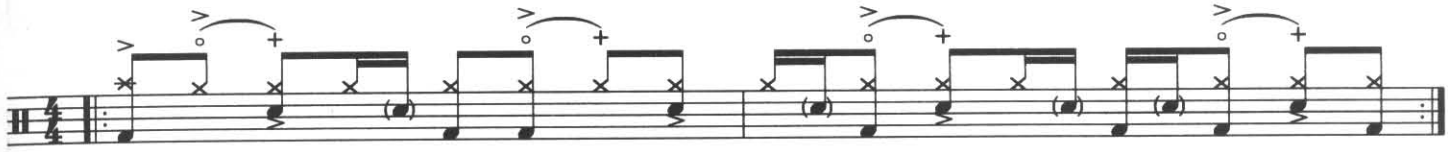
CD 1 27 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE

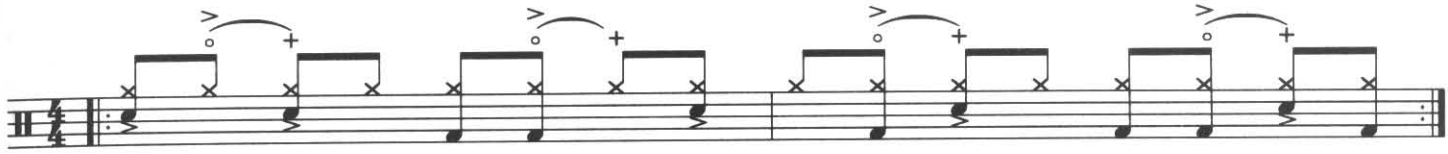


INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE

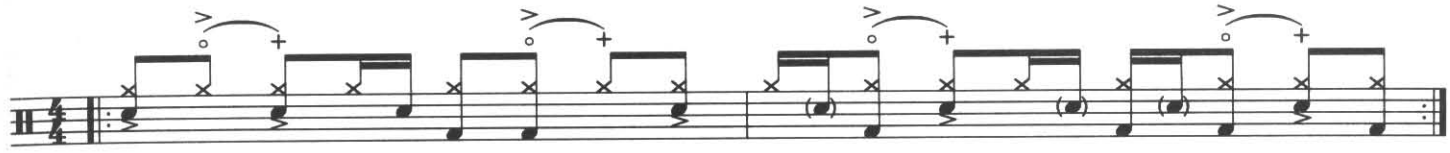


BASIC BRIDGE GROOVE

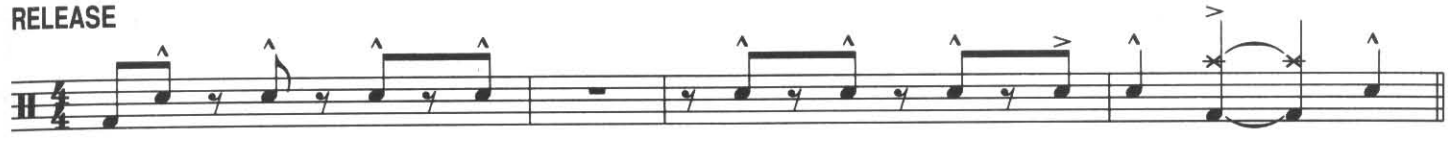


INTERMEDIATE BRIDGE GROOVE

ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE



RELEASE



Harmonic ambiguity is the name of the game here. In the verse, we have a Dorian horn vamp moving from Em7 to Dm7, yet Bernard is laying on some F♯'s underneath the Dm7. The Bridge shifts into a "C" blues tonality moving between C7 and F7 and Bernard once again goes against the grain, emphasizing some low "E" naturals against the F7. These notes could be described as passing tones in a chromatic line, but the fact that Bernard draws attention to the situation by leaping into them, and then sustains these dissonances for fairly long durations, makes that explanation inadequate. Bernard was just trying to get something happenin' in a very repetitive musical environment. Dissonance just happened to be be the tool he used to achieve that end. When you have a stagnant harmonic menu such as we have here, one of the ways to create movement and tension is by stretching the tonal borders and then bringing them back in. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 118)

D Dorian — Vamp

LAST TIME GOING TO BRIDGE

D Dorian — Vamp

BRIDGE

C7 — F9 — Vamp

LAST TIME GOING TO RELEASE

C7 — F9

RELEASE

N.C. — G9 — Back to Verse

"Country" Kellum is a mellow guy but he's been carrying around a minor chip on his shoulder for three decades. For years, credit for the scratch style guitar parts on James Brown hits has gone to Jimmy Nolen. So here's the real deal: according to "Country" and several other band members, Jimmy was certainly a master scratch guitarist, but more often than not he played muted single-note lines and blues licks. The percussive scratch parts were usually performed by "Country" Kellum.

"Cold Sweat" is the perfect vehicle to set things straight on this matter. Of all the scratch parts in James Brown's recorded output, this is by far the "scratchiest." If you listen closely, you can hear the major 2nd interval (between the "C" and "D") poke through on the chord he's fingering, but for the most part, there is no pitch at all coming out of his guitar. To copy his sound, strum hard and place your fingers on the strings, exerting no downward pressure. The strings should sound completely dead. James Brown referred to guitarists who played in this style as "chankers."

It seems like no one wants to be a guitarist on this track. While Alfonzo is scratching away trying to act like a percussionist, Jimmy Nolen is playing a root- fifth line that could easily have functioned as the bass part to the tune if Bernard Odum had chosen to use it instead of his own part. Nevertheless, Jimmy's and Bernard's lines mesh so perfectly, they almost sound as if they're playing a bass duet. Jimmy puts a unique twist on his line in the second and third verses by changing it into a one-bar pattern and rhythmically displacing the notes by two beats. What used to happen on beats "one" and "two" are now found on "three" and "four," and vice versa.

After joining forces with Clyde Stubblefield's earthquake heavy snare on the C7th chords in the bridge vamp, Jimmy executes an ingenious little piece of rhythmic counterpoint in the second half of the bar. In the midst of a dense rhythmic arrangement, the band has left a hole on the downbeat of "four" that's wide enough for a sumo wrestler to run through. Nolen slides in all alone with a simple three-note F6 voicing and meets up with the rest of the rhythm section and the horns for the F9th played on the upbeat. It sounds almost as if the entire band stopped dead for a half of a beat to spotlight one instrument. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 118)

D Dorian

Vamp

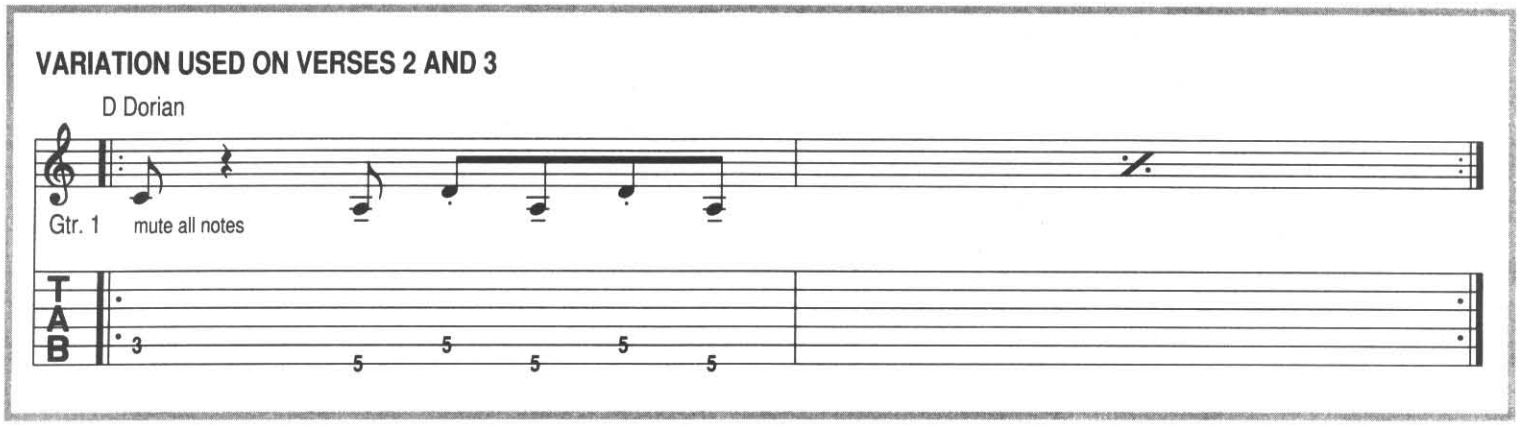
Gtr. 1

mute all notes

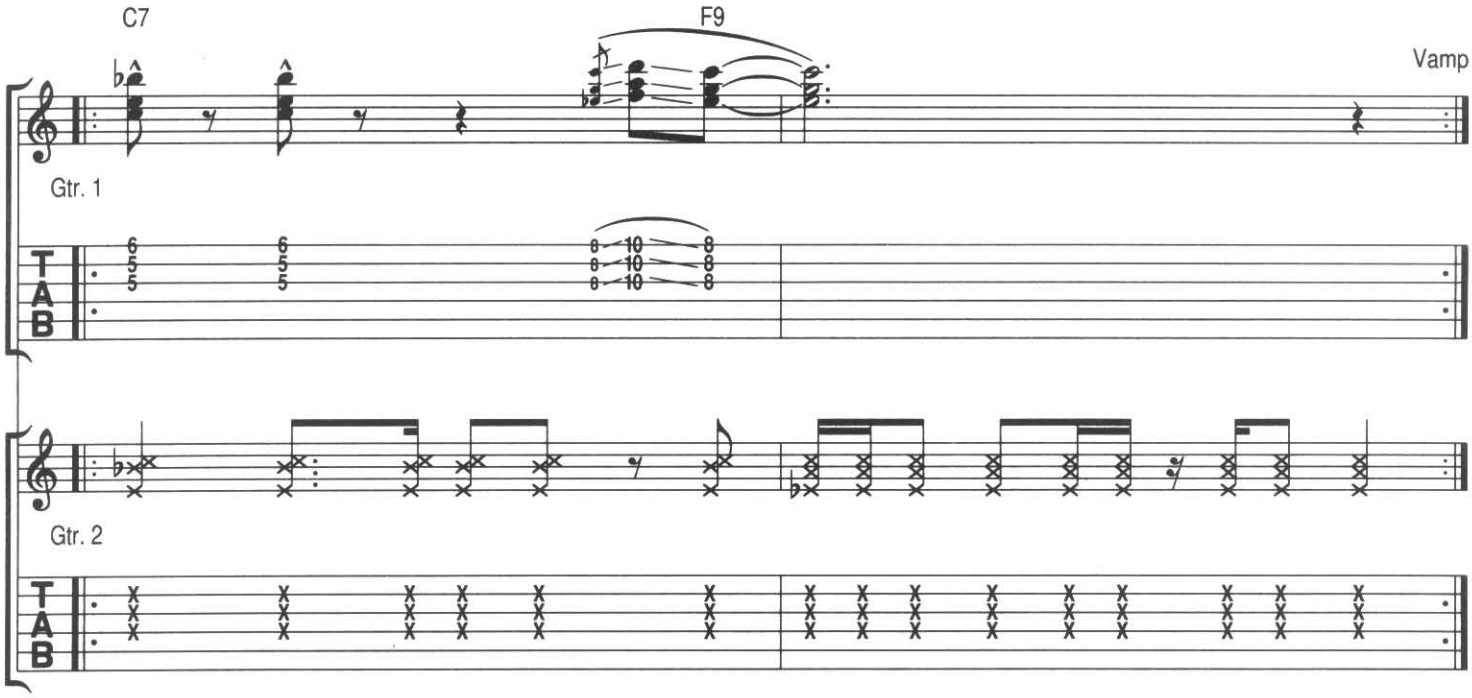
Gtr. 2

mute indicated notes with left hand so that practically no pitch is sounded, only a percussive attack.

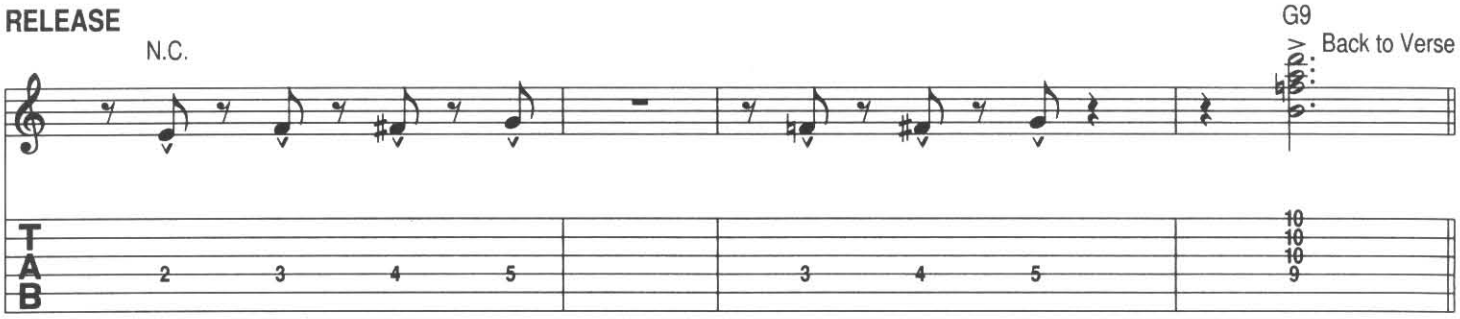
VARIATION USED ON VERSES 2 AND 3



BRIDGE



RELEASE



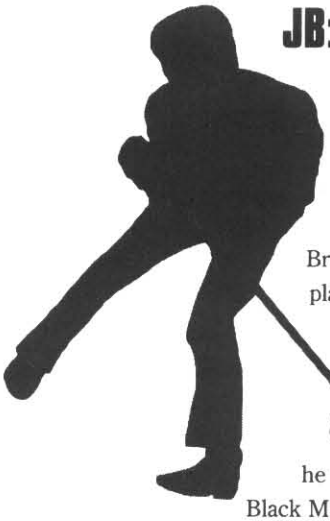
chapter 8

I CAN'T STAND MYSELF (WHEN YOU TOUCH ME), PT. 1

recorded october, 1967

You've just had two monster hits with a revamped band, your visibility and tan-base is larger than it's ever been, and you've made so much money, you now own your own Learjet. So you're obviously going to stay on the same path-right? Well not it you're James Brown. In one of his typically, unpredictable moves, James decides to cut his next hit with an all white band from Cincinnati called the Dapps.

Working with a song title that could keep an army of befuddled psychiatrists scratching their heads for a few months, bassist Tim Drummond, guitarist "Fat Eddie" Setzer, and drummer William "Beau Dollar" Bowman helped JB to create a trance-like E♭7(♯9) groove that became the model for many of the ensuing one chord jams that would till out his portfolio in the coming years. With the total instrumentation consisting of just guitar, bass, drums, and organ, this is by far, the smallest production in James Brown's recorded catalog. Groove-wise, however, this track looms large.

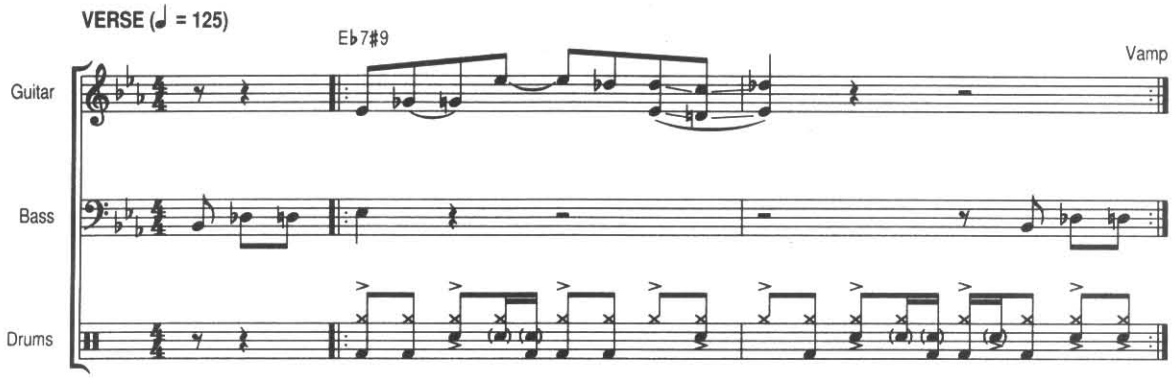


JB: The Equal Opportunity Employer

In the band's early days, James and his musicians were refused service at hotels and restaurants from time to time, particularly in the deep South. One one occasion in Jackson, Mississippi, three white acts he was touring with came to his aide. Jay and the Americans, the Dovells, and the Hollywood Argyles coolly informed a racist hotel manager that they were going to check out shortly after the hotel checked them in and then claimed that there weren't enough rooms for James Brown and his band. Miraculously, a new wing of the hotel was discovered and JB's entourage had a place to sleep that night.

A decade later, a much wealthier and more powerful Godfather returned the favor when one of his musicians was confronted with a similar situation. But this time, racial intolerance was coming from the other side of the street. As the first white musician in James Brown's band, bassist Tim Drummond was often the target of black militants and nationalists who felt that he was costing a black man a job. At a concert date, Brown was confronted backstage by a group of Black Muslims who demanded to know what he was doing with a white bass player in his band. JB's reply was, 'I don't see no white bass player." Pointing to Tim Drummond, the angry spokesman for the Muslims fumed, "That man right over there. He's a white bass player!" James looked in the direction they were pointing and calmly replied, "Oh, you mean Tim. That ain't no white bass player. That's *MY* bass player."

I CAN'T STAND MYSELF (WHEN YOU TOUCH ME), PT. 1 •master score•



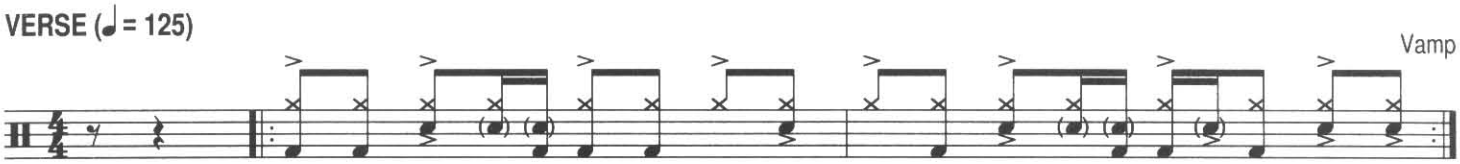
WILLIAM "BEAU DOLLAR" BOWMAN •drums•

It was difficult, if not impossible, to escape the impact of Clyde Stubblefield's compelling drum work on "Cold Sweat." Whether it was James Brown trying to capitalize on that hit or William Bowman paying homage to this great musician, the drum part on "I Can't Stand Myself" was a continuation of Clyde's "Cold Sweat" concept. We find the same ghosted snares, displaced backbeats, and avoidance of the downbeat of "one" (in the second bar of the pattern), but William still manages to throw in a few twists and turns that are all his own.

The open-and-closed hi-hat pattern becomes a steady stream of eighth-notes on a closed hat with accented downbeats. An added touch that helps to propel each two-bar phrase into the succeeding one is William's two accented snare drum attacks on beat "four" of the second bar.

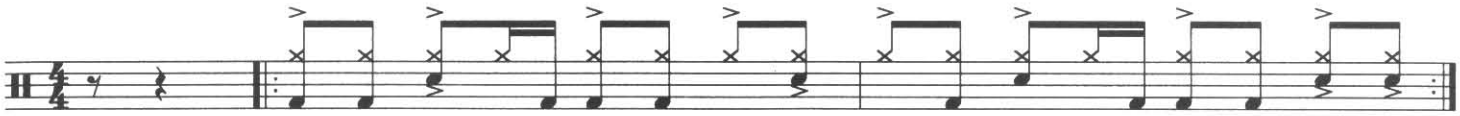
William Bowman worked on numerous recording projects with James Brown in the mid-'60s, but his appearance on a significant JB hit was limited to this one-time cameo appearance. Nevertheless, with his performance on "I Can't Stand Myself," he has left us with a deep-pocketed and powerful addition to the drum lore of the James Brown orchestra. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 125)

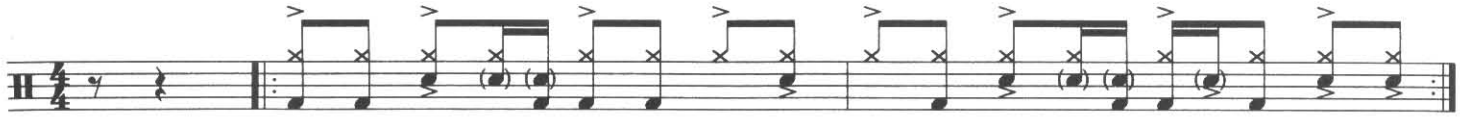


DRUM LESSON

BASIC VERSE GROOVE



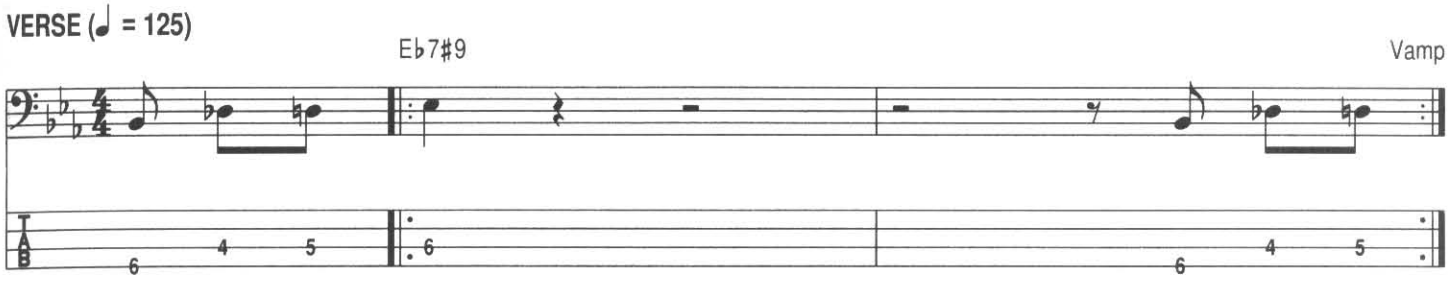
ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



TIM DRUMMOND •bass•

CD 1 32 TRACK

Somebody was listening to Miles Davis. You couldn't find a more minimalist approach to a funk groove than this bass line. Tim Drummond's unselfish decision to play with silence instead of notes is what makes this groove so intriguing. His bass line, in its entirety, is nothing more than three eighth-note pickups and a downbeat at the beginning of each two-bar phrase, but it sets the stage for the guitar line in bar one and then highlights and gives breathing room to the complex drum figures in bar two. The reward for his workman-like, team-oriented approach comes in the last thirty seconds of "I Can't Stand Myself" when James offers him a rare bass solo opportunity, imploring, "Tim! Help Me Out, Tim! Let me hear you walk a little bit, Tim!" ◆

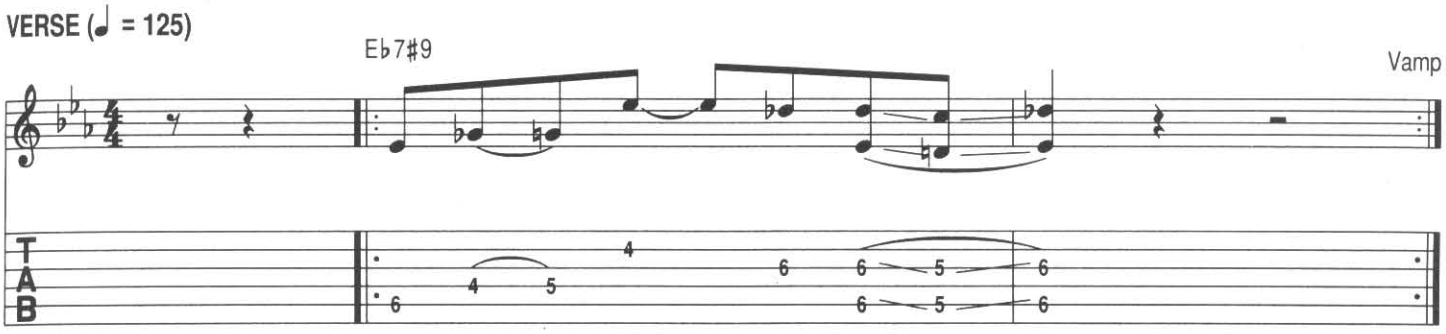


"FAT EDDIE" SETSER •guitar•

CD 1 33 TRACK

"Fat Eddie" wins the originality award for this one. This is one of those guitar licks that makes you shake your head in amazement and say "Where the hell did he come up with that idea?" You could picture Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band's legendary guitarists Antennae Jimmy Semens and Zoot Horn Rollo coming up with a guitar part like this, but a James Brown guitarist? No way.

It's not that it's harmonically "out," dissonant, disjointed, or anything like that. It's just that, for an instrument which is so pattern- and finger-shape-oriented, this comes from way out in left field. It would be a fairly run-of-the-mill blues lick if it were played an octave up at the 11th fret position. Played as written at the 4th fret position, it becomes a rarity. And when was the last time you played a riff with the sliding 7ths which are featured at the end of this phrase? For some reason, this interval is one of the most overlooked of the lot amongst guitarists. We like 3rds, 4ths, 5ths, 6ths, octaves, tenths—even the occasional 2nd—but not the 7th. In the midst of all the 9th chords, scratch parts, and muted guitar ostinatos, Eddie provides James Brown fans with a nice change of pace in this clever and unique two-bar pattern. ◆



chapter 9

I GOT THE FEELIN'

recorded january, 1968

Hands down, no argument tolerated, *this* is the nastiest track in this entire book—and with good reason. When "I Got the Feelin'" was recorded, James Brown's musicians were in a period of perpetual rehearsal during which they constantly refined and redefined their groove. Their skin-tight precision came as a consequence of their increasingly demanding boss and the perfectionist work ethic and creative rehearsal techniques of bandleader "Pee Wee" Ellis. Isolating the rhythm, vocal, and horn sections for separate drill sessions while constantly pushing them with more and more complex and intricate arrangements, "Pee Wee" unleashed a monster. When James would bellow "Hit me!" in the midst of a tune, a dozen or more perfectly synchronized Mack Trucks would run him over.

Recorded at Vox studios in Van Nuys, California, this track took ten takes before all the parts fell into place. Brown himself became an integral part of this syncopated masterpiece, weaving in and out of the rhythmic tapestry created by the band. With an unending arsenal of off-beat and disjointed vocal phrases, he adds to the stiletto-sharp, angular feel of this track as he alternates between going with, and then against, the grain of the groove.

It's the drama of the tension and release that makes this track so compelling. Will Clyde Stubblefield play one too many ghosted snare drum notes and cause the groove to come crashing down around him because of an inadvertently created bar of 17/16? Will James push the envelope of his in-and-out-of-synch phrasing a bit too far in the next verse, and wind up not being able to find his way back? Will the trumpet player's head explode on the next high "G?" Not on this track, but stay tuned for more death-defying pyrotechnics by the world's funkiest band. You just might get the human sacrifice you've been waiting for in the next tune down the line. ◆

Courtesy of Alan Leeds

L to R: Bernard Odum, James Brown, "Jab'o" Starks, Clyde Stubblefield

VERSE (♩ = 126)

F7

Play 3 times

Guitar 1

↑ This note is sometimes ghosted or omitted

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

LAST TIME GOING TO BRIDGE

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

BRIDGE (Gtr. 1 is tacet on bridge)

B♭7

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

Back to Verse

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD •drums•

CD 1 34 TRACK

Clyde must have been going through backbeat aversion therapy when he cut this track. With the exception of one solid hit on the second beat of the verse groove's second bar, every snare drum attack in this song is either ghosted or moved over to an upbeat. Downbeats on the kick drum are also a rarity. Their only occurrence is on the first beat of each phrase. Add the upbeat accents of the open-and-closed hi-hat figures to this mix and it spells: Y-O-U N-E-E-D T-O P-R-A-C-T-I-C-E.

Because there is so little to hang on to in the way of solid downbeats, you must be constantly aware of where "one" is, or this groove falls off the table. It might help to start by learning the bridge pattern first as it's a simpler and more accessible version of the verse groove. Take your hat off when you listen to Clyde playing on this recording. You're in the midst of greatness. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 126)

Play 4 times

BRIDGE

Back to Verse

DRUM LESSON

CD 1 35 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE

INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE

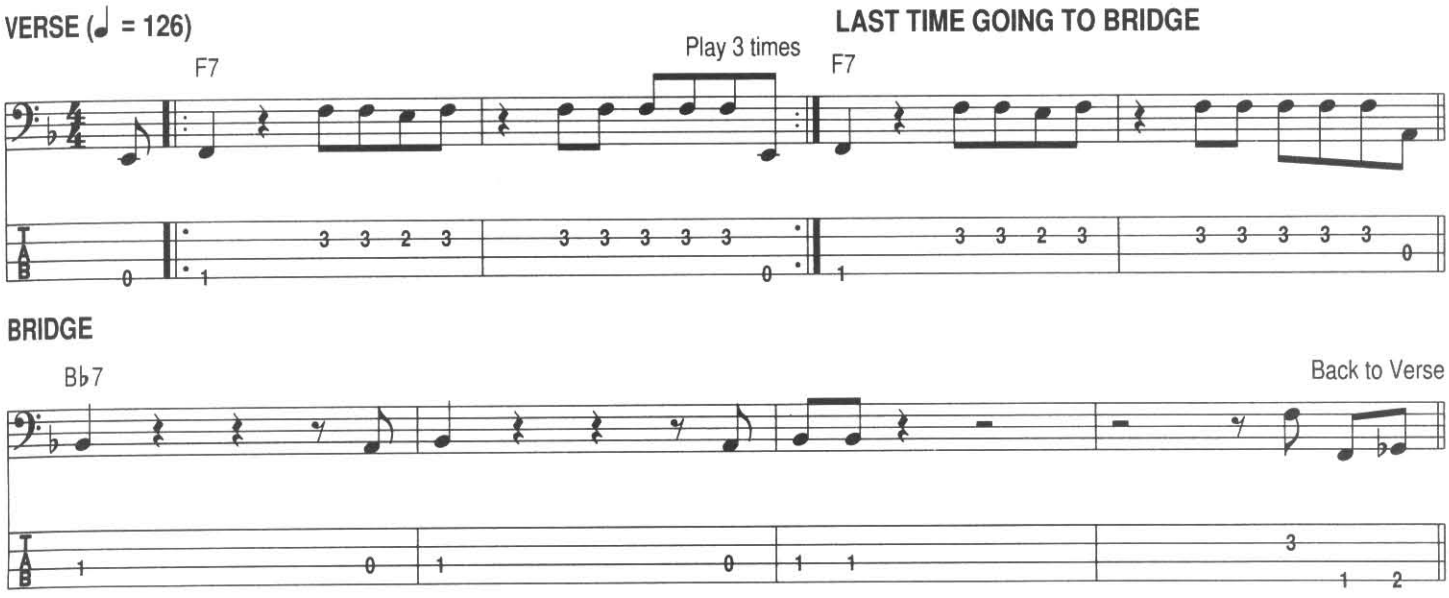
BASIC BRIDGE GROOVE

INTERMEDIATE BRIDGE GROOVE

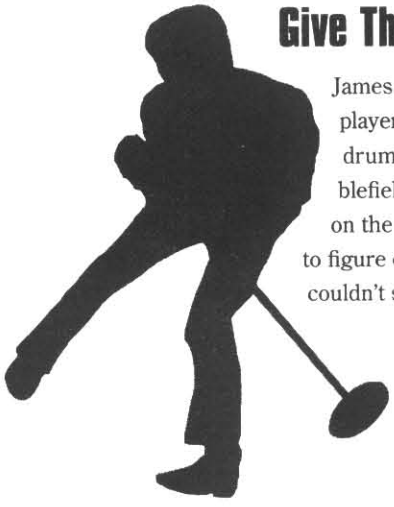
ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE

This is one of Bernard's simplest bass parts, but it might just be the most crucial line he ever played on a James Brown recording. With all the diabolical rhythmic motifs swirling above him, Bernard is the only one holding down the fort. His job is to provide maximum bottom and give the listener a no-doubt-about-it sense of where each two-bar phrase begins. Acting as a beacon of light and rhythmic stability amidst all the syncopations and truncated phrases, his bass line continually shouts out, *"AND ONE!"*

This is done by continually returning to the low end of his bass at the end and beginning of each phrase. In the verses, he plays an open "E" on the "and" of "four" and leads into the low "F" on the downbeat. Bernard then treats the bridge in a similar fashion, using the open "A" string and the low "B♭" in the same rhythmic spots. The technical simplicity and the overwhelming stabilizing influence of this bass part makes it the kind of line that begs you to dig in and rock the house. ◆



Give The Drummer Some... (Microphones!)



James Brown's early and mid-sixties rhythm sections quickly learned that if you weren't a horn player or a vocalist, you'd better have a loud amp, strong hands, or some serious lumber for your drumsticks because there was no way you were getting a microphone or a monitor. Clyde Stubblefield told Modern Drummer, "I remember playing Soldier Field in Chicago once. We were down on the field and we had these little Vox PA systems. I looked way up at the top rows and I'm trying to figure out how they're going to hear us. But they were up there rockin'! My hands were bleeding. I couldn't stop though. Blood was everywhere from hitting those drums so hard."

JIMMY NOLEN AND ALFONZO "COUNTRY" KELLUM •guitars•

CD 1 37 TRACK

Nolen and Kellum continue with the successful guitar formula they established in "Cold Sweat" but in reverse. In the verses, "Country" changes his role and plays the melodic line while Jimmy takes over the scratch chores. The rhythmic counterpoint of the two guitar parts, however, is quite different. Check out how they dovetail into each other like the joinery on a fine piece of furniture. "Country" plays the downbeat of "one," Jimmy plays the downbeat of "two," and then the two parts meet on the upbeat. Then Jimmy plays the downbeat of "three," the two parts meet again on the upbeat, and the measure ends with Jimmy playing the downbeat of "four" while "Country" plays the upbeat, sustaining it over into the second measure.

By themselves, the verse guitar parts are almost child-like in their simplicity. "Country" is playing a basic arpeggiated F7th figure while Jimmy plays four scratches and then ends up with the tritone of the F7th ("A" and "E♭"). Put them together, add bass and drums, and this funky two-part invention could make even Johann Sebastian Bach say "Baby, Baby, Baby... I Got The Feelin'."

The electrifying bridge section is a playground-style duel, pitting Nolen and Kellum against "Pee Wee" Ellis and Maceo Parker's boys. The guitars nail their B♭7 voicings through the first beat-and-a-half and immediately get a butt kickin', in-your-face reply from a very aggressive and confident horn section on the upbeat of "two." Although the second guitar on the bridge is completely inaudible on the recording, "Country" remembers playing the same rhythms as Jimmy but with a lower B♭7 voicing. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 126)

F7

Play 4 times

Gtr. 1

↑ This note is sometimes ghosted or omitted

Gtr. 2

BRIDGE (Guitar 1 is tacet on bridge)

B♭7

Back to Verse

Gtr. 2

chapter 10

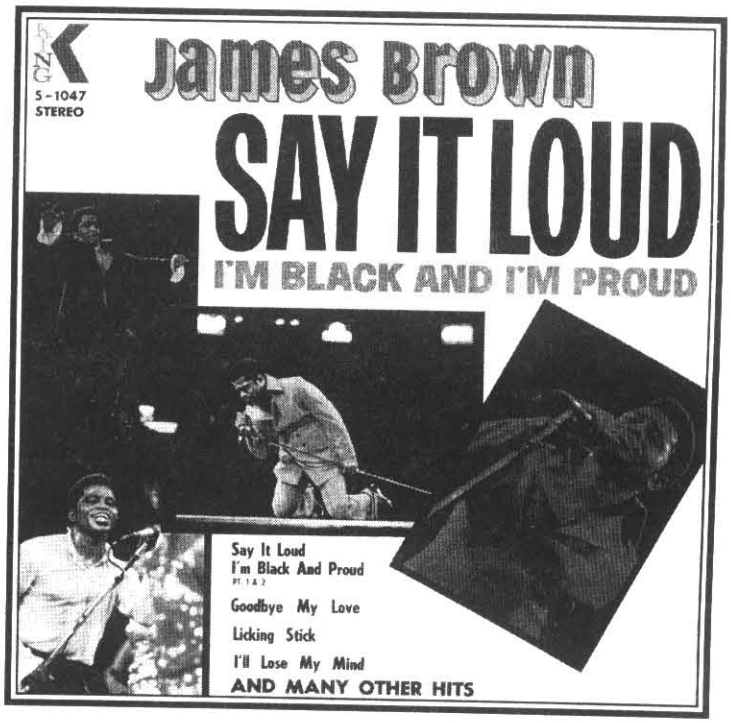
LICKING STICK-LICKING STICK

recorded april, 1968

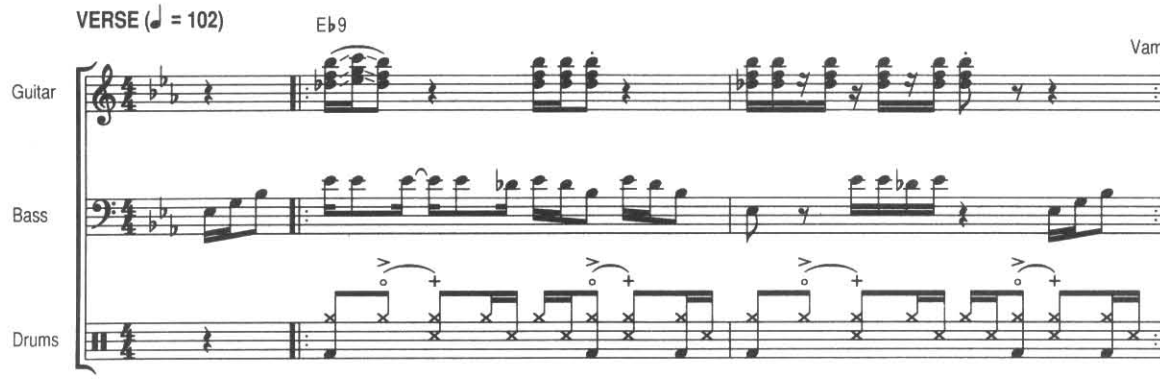
James Brown's prestige and political clout were at an all-time high, but he was about to take some flak both literally and figuratively. Entertaining the troops on a tour of Vietnam, the planes and helicopters transporting him and his band around the countryside experienced mortar and anti-aircraft attacks. The hits he was about to take at home were equally distressing.

Shortly before leaving for Vietnam, Brown had released "America Is My Home," a self-penned, patriotic song that promptly ignited a hostile and emotional response from the African-American community. Enduring accusations of selling out to "The Man" and being a "Tom," the besieged Soul Brother #1 already had a built-in response: "America Is My Home" and "Licking Stick" were released at the same time. As he recalled in his autobiography, "If the people who were on me about 'America Is My Home' wanted to know who James Brown was, all they had to do was listen to 'Licking Stick.' My music said where I stood."

Recorded a few days after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, 'America Is My Home' and 'Licking Stick' found Black America in a particularly unreceptive mood. Explaining in his lyrics, "I don't profess to be no teacher, these are my latest outlooks," Brown's rebuttal of rhythm pitted the politics of race in a life and death struggle with the "Camel Walk" and the "Mashed Potatoes." What do you want America, political correctness or Funk? ◆



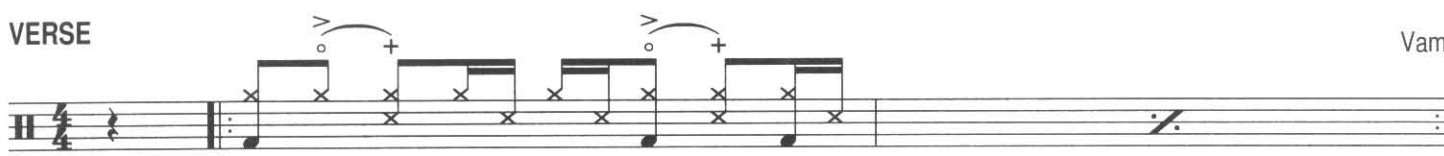
LICKING STICK •master score•



JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

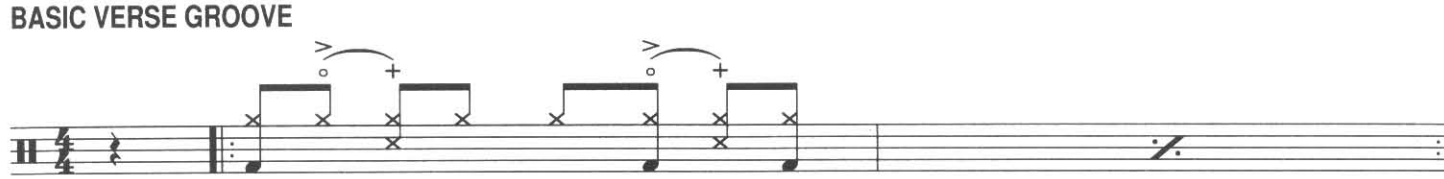
Just as Clyde Stubblefield used "Cold Sweat" and "I Got The Feelin'" to stake out his territory, "Licking Stick" is the tune in which Jab'o Starks stepped forward and said, "This is what my groove is all about." Clyde's bombastic, funkified drum style found its soul mate in the cool and collected elegance of "Jab'o's" cross-stick groove. "I had always heard that "Licking Stick" rhythm pattern in my head," recalls "Jab'o," "but I never had the chance to record it. James gave me that chance. I asked him if I could put it in there. It was one of those Latin grooves I had kept in my head for a long time."

The cross-stick pattern is a fusion of standard R&B backbeats with some Latin-influenced clave rhythms. Combined with the upbeat kick drum accents and the "skipping," open-and-closed hi-hat pattern (which would become a staple of his drum style), "Jab'o" creates a one-of-a-kind drum beat that perfectly complements the light touch of the bass and guitar parts. This is not a heavy-handed groove. It relies on subtlety, feel, and the precision of the sixteenth-note syncopations. It also proves that there is another side to funk than the usual slammin' backbeats and spine-shattering kick drums. ◆

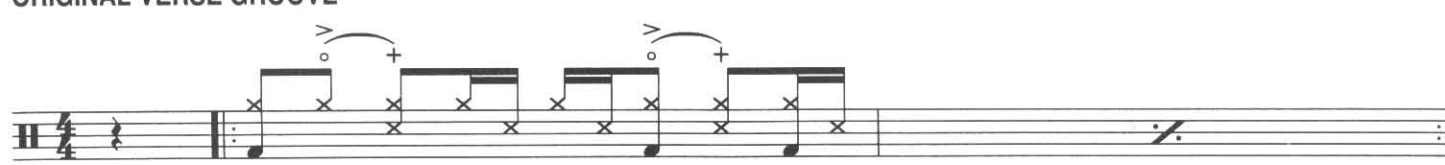


DRUM LESSON

BASIC VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE

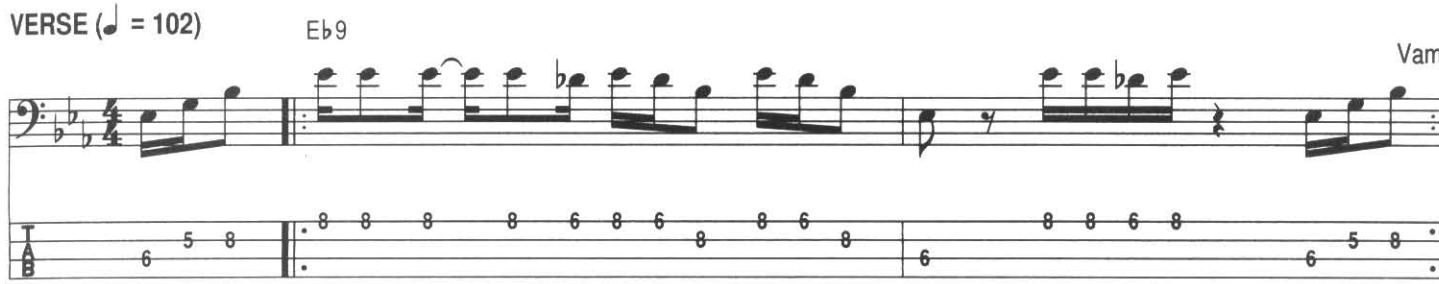


TIM DRUMMOND •bass•

CD 1 40 TRACK

Symbolic of the troubled times that ran parallel with his occupancy of the bass chair in James Brown's band, Tim Drummond's short tenure was filled with controversy and rancor. As the lone white face on JB's stage, Tim continued to *be the* focal point of threats and verbal abuse directed at him by racial and musical purists who liked their R&B black. Leaving the country didn't make matters any better. Dodging artillery fire in Vietnam with his boss, Tim came back to the States with a bad case of hepatitis, an illness that would knock him off the road before the end of the year.

Thankfully, the politics of race and his physical ailment did not affect his bass playing. A study in contrasts from his simple, bottom-heavy performance on "I Can't Stand Myself," Tim lays down a dynamic, high register bass ostinato in "Licking Stick"—a bass line that has humbled many aspiring funkaholics. The technical difficulty increases the more you dig in, so keep it light. If you listen to Tim's original part, you'll find a relaxed, almost delicate feel. This type of approach will help a great deal when tackling the syncopated figures on the first two beats of bar one. ◆

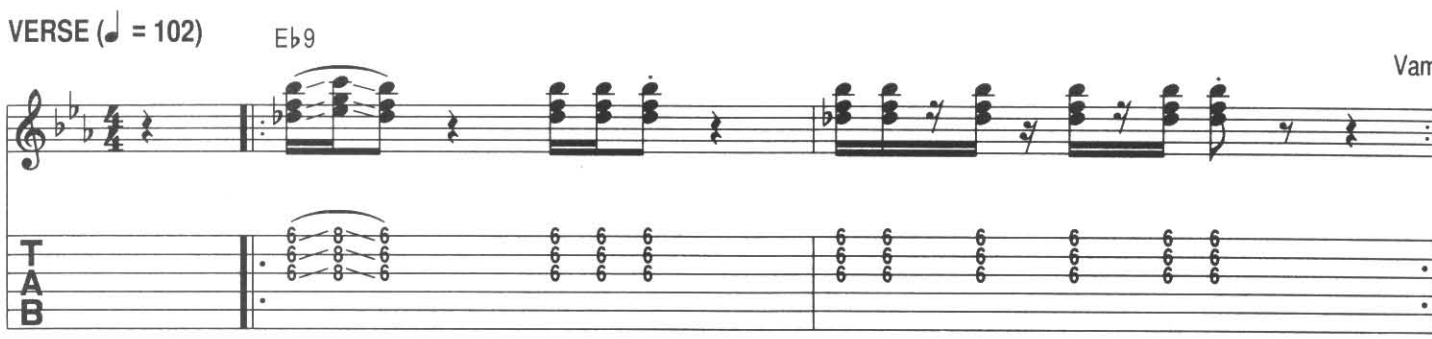


JIMMY NOLEN •guitar•

CD 1 41 TRACK

The ambiguity of James Brown's verbal message in "Licking Stick" was reflected in the harmonic structure of the tune. The name of the game is *"Hide The Third."* After the three-note, arpeggiated pickup figure that sets up each phrase, the bass line is made up of just roots, 5ths, and 7ths. Jimmy Nolen only flirts with the elusive 3rd ("G") in the midst of sliding his three-note chord structure back and forth. "Pee Wee" Ellis and his organ backbeats come to the rescue, firmly establishing an E♭7 tonality. The subtlety of this harmonic mystery is one of the keys to sustaining the listener's interest for five minutes of what is essentially a one-chord tune.

The organ is also the key to *rhythmically* locking in to this groove. The guitar part is basically three separate rhythmic statements. *Dah-ee-ah* (breath), *Dah-dah-dah* (breath), *Dah-dah-dah-dah-dah-dah* (breath). The organ backbeat chord is what happens in each of these breaths, functioning as a solid rhythmic landmark in the midst of all the drum and bass syncopations. It's just like the old "hit it where they ain't" philosophy in baseball. When the guitar plays, the organ doesn't, and vice versa. ◆



chapter 11

GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (STUDIO VERSION)

recorded october, 1968

If there is such a thing as being too funky for your own good, then the James Brown band stands accused in this rhythmic puzzle of a tune. If you were in the vicinity of Miami's famed Criteria Studios on October 29, 1968 when "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose" was cut, you might have seen the Funk Patrol carrying out some dazed and bewildered musicians on stretchers.

The first victim of the rhythm section's devilishly complex groove is the horn section, which receives an admonition from the boss to "Start it over again" after getting turned around and playing two weak and confused horn entrances in the first thirty seconds of the record. The second case involves the rhythm section players, who were in the line of fire of a chorus of "No-no-no-no-no's" from James Brown when he felt they were about to go to the bridge before he was ready.

Bassist Charles Sherrell explained to Harry Weinger, "James saw us lean into getting ready for the chord change. But it wasn't the right time, and he waved us off." If you listen closely, you can hear that Charles wasn't the culprit. He doesn't budge off of the two-bar verse figure he'd been playing. The perpetrator is actually drummer Nate Jones, as he lands on the downbeat of the problem spot with the same cymbal crash he had used to start all of the song's previous bridges. Sherrell isn't off the hook, though; he'd missed the entrance to the second bridge sixty seconds earlier.

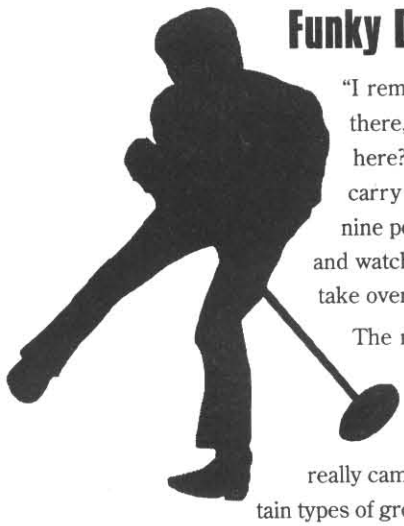
So why do you think the Godfather kept this take instead of rolling back the tape and cutting another? There's a very simple answer: Sherrell, Jones, and the rest of the band kicked large ass on this track!! Agonizing over every note is a symptom of '80s and '90s pop music—not the music of James Brown. Feel always reigns supreme over the notes played in his realm. You can tell by his cocky laugh as the track fades down that Brown knew the musicians had given him what he wanted. If there is a lesson to be learned from this track, particularly in regard to performing with James Brown and learning his system of body and vocal cues, the following three rules should be your bible:

Rule #1: Don't ever take your eyes off James Brown.

Rule #2: Don't ever take your eyes off James Brown.

Rule #3: Refer to rules number one and two. ◆

Funky Drummers Pts. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & (6)

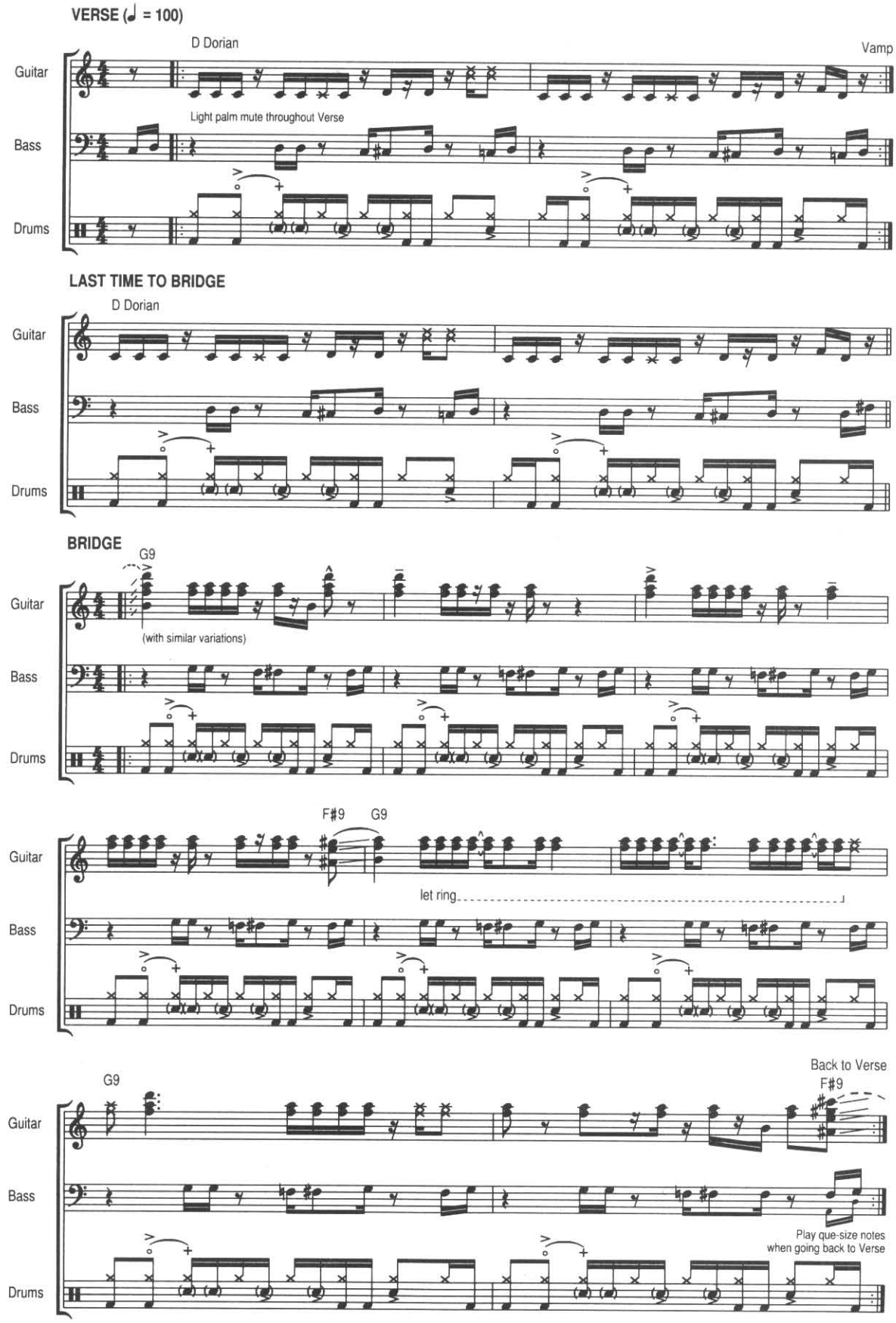


"I remember when I first joined the band and I looked on stage and there were five drummers there," "Jab'o" Starks reminisces. "Five drummers! I couldn't believe it. I thought, 'What am I doin' here?'" James Brown eventually pared it down to just "Jab'o" and Clyde Stubblefield, but he did carry five (and sometimes six) drummers with him for several years during the mid-'60s. Ninety-nine percent of the time, only one drummer played on a given song while the other four or five sat and watched in a state of red alert. They could be called upon at any time in the show to jump in and take over—even in mid-tune.

The multiple-drummer concept evolved out of the physical demands of Brown's marathon concerts. One unmic'd drummer couldn't possibly maintain the intensity level Brown demanded during his four-hour extravaganzas. JB also liked the overwhelming visual aspect that half a dozen drum sets presented to his audiences. But at the end of the day, it really came down to a matter of casting. James Brown liked to assign specific drummers to handle certain types of grooves. If he wanted hard and driving, Clyde was the man. For more subtle finesse type beats, Brown's finger pointed to "Jab'o." The other stage drummers provided the Godfather with even more choices of rhythmic shadings and feels.

GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (STUDIO VERSION) •master score•

CD 1 42 TRACK



NATE JONES •drums•

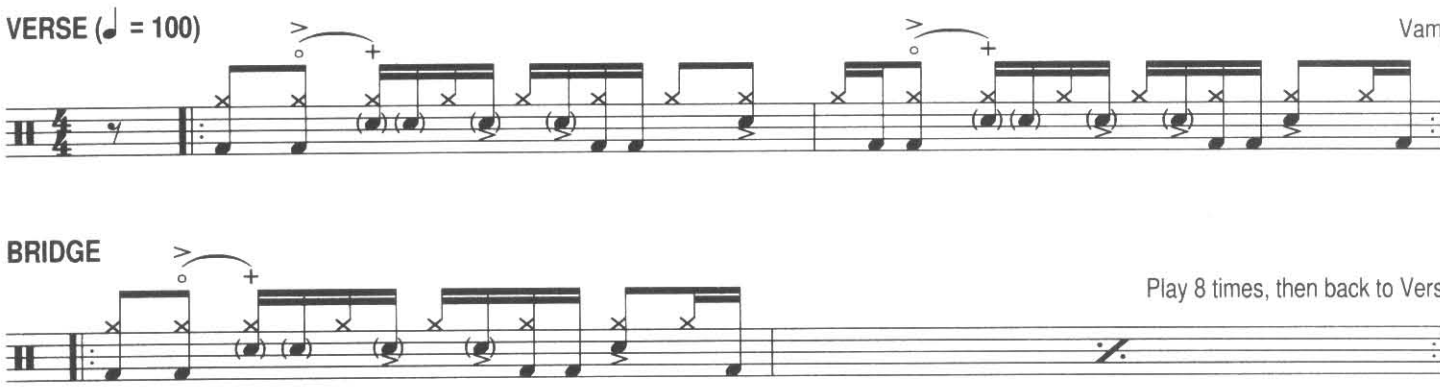
CD 1 42 TRACK

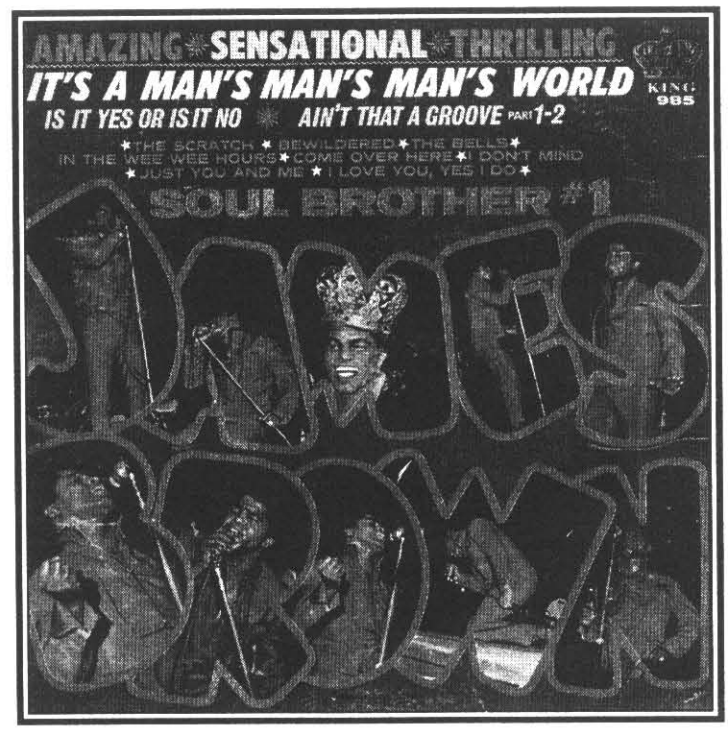
When Nate Jones walked into the studio to record "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose," he was confronted by the same challenge that faced William Bowman twelve months earlier when he cut "I Can't Stand Myself:" "How do you escape the overwhelming influence of Clyde Stubblefield and assert your own identity?" On the surface, it sounds like Nate surrendered to the inevitable and became a Clyde clone.

The eighth-note, open-and-closed hi-hat, the ghosted snare drum, and the avoidance of solid downbeats make this pattern appear to be a continuation of the same concept that Clyde had developed in "Cold Sweat" and "I Got The Feelin'." But look a little closer and you'll find that Nate's groove has pushed this idea to the outermost reaches of intergalactic funkdom.

This two-bar pattern is basically a "connect the dots" concept. Nate gives you a solid downbeat on beat "one" of the first bar and then he mercifully throws you a lifeline with a solid accented snare drum backbeat on beat "four" of the second measure. As far as the six beats in between, well... you're on your own pal. First of all, there are three different snare drum sound levels: ghosted notes (shown in parenthesis), slightly accented ghosted snares (shown in parenthesis with an accent), and accented notes (no parenthesis and a sidewards accent).

And whassup with dat kick drum? If you thought it was hard to find beat "one" in the midst of Clyde's "I Got The Feelin'" groove, wait until you sit down and try to play Nate's oddball concoction. Outside of some of the off-the-wall drum creations of the astral traveling drummers who played with Sun Ra, you will never find a more syncopated, offbeat kick drum part. The key to keeping everything from falling apart is to keep a constant sixteenth-note running through your head. If there is one transcription in this book where it is highly recommended that you build up to the original pattern through the basic and intermediate levels, this is the one. It must be stated at this point that the authors assume no responsibility for mental and emotional disorders that result from trying to master this groove. ◆

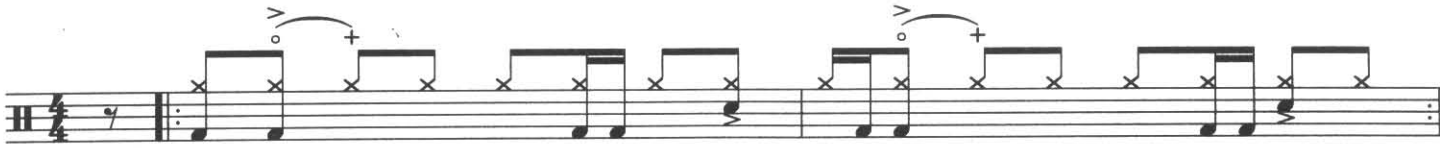




DRUM LESSON

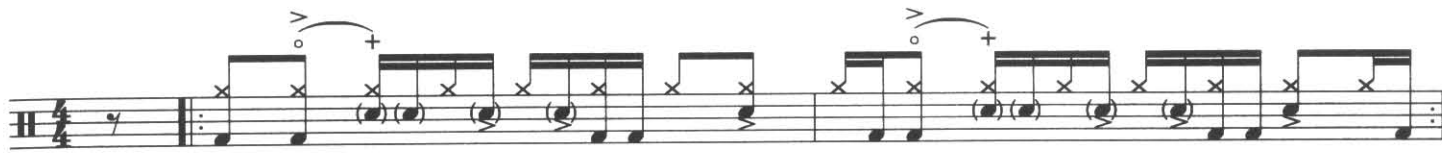
CD 1 43 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE

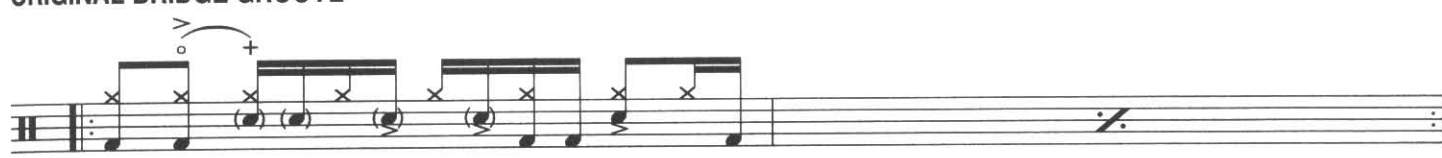


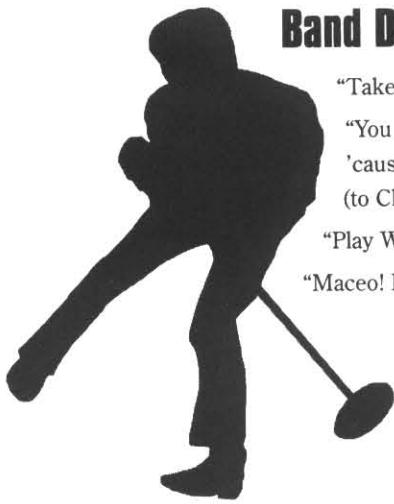
INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE





Band Directions—Godfather Style Pt. 2

"Take me into the change." (from "Funky Drummer")

"You don't have to do no soloin', Brother, just keep what you got. Don't turn it loose, 'cause it's a mother."
(to Clyde Stubblefield in "Funky Drummer")

"Play With Your Bad Self." (to Maceo Parker in "I Don't Want Nobody To Give Me Nothing")

"Maceo! Blow your horn!" ("Mother Popcorn")

CHARLES "SWEETS" SHERRELL •bass•

CD 1 44 TRACK

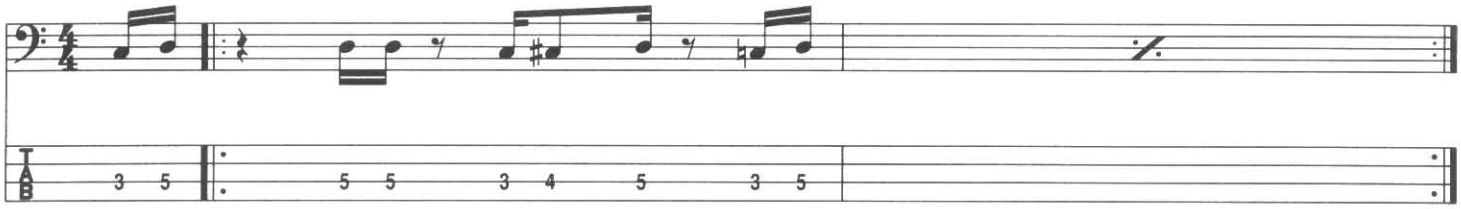
The never-ending ebb and flow of ideas in James Brown's musical creations owed as much to the non-stop migration of musicians in and out of his band as it did to his own genius. Whether it was within the horn section, the rhythm section, or the background vocalist department, some element of the sound was always morphing in a new direction, often as a result of a new member joining the band. While Starks, Stubblefield, Nolen, and Kellum were continuing their drum and guitar lineages, the bass chair took an abrupt turn when Charles Sherrell took over the helm from Bernard Odum. With a bolder and busier style, Sherrell blasted through the racially charged summer of 1968 with his tough-as-nails bass line on "Say It Loud-I'm Black And I'm Proud."

Several months later, Charles broke new ground with a terse, unyielding ostinato executed with sequencer-like precision on "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose." Built entirely around chordal roots and a chromatic walk-up from a whole-step below, this highly syncopated, staccato bass line defied the traditional supportive or "foundation" role of the bass that had been established over the previous decade and a half. With virtually no melodic elements in this line and phrases that begin and end with anticipations rather than solid downbeats, Charles's aim is to lose himself in the flow and mesh with the rhythmic fabric being created all around him.

So what do you have to hang onto in this groove so you can establish your lock? If you're looking for a traditional component like a snare drum backbeat or a straight-ahead guitar strum, you won't find it. You have to change your head and your approach for this tune. Don't look or listen for technical elements to hang your hat on. It's much more basic than that. As "Jab'o" Starks emphatically states over and over, "You can't write out a lot of what's happening in this music. You just have to feel it." ◆

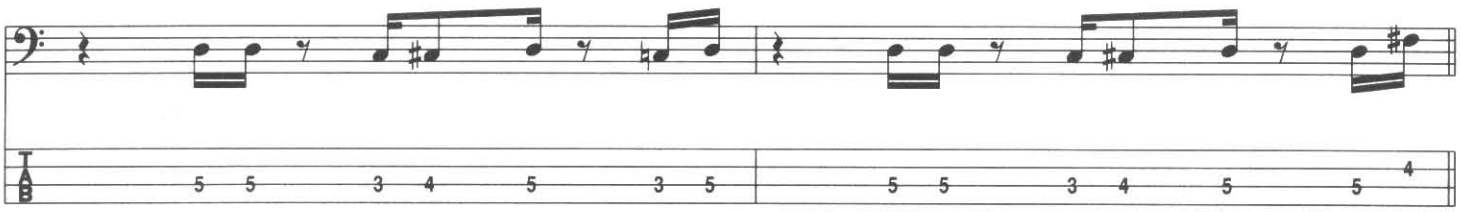
VERSE (♩ = 100)

D Dorian — Vamp



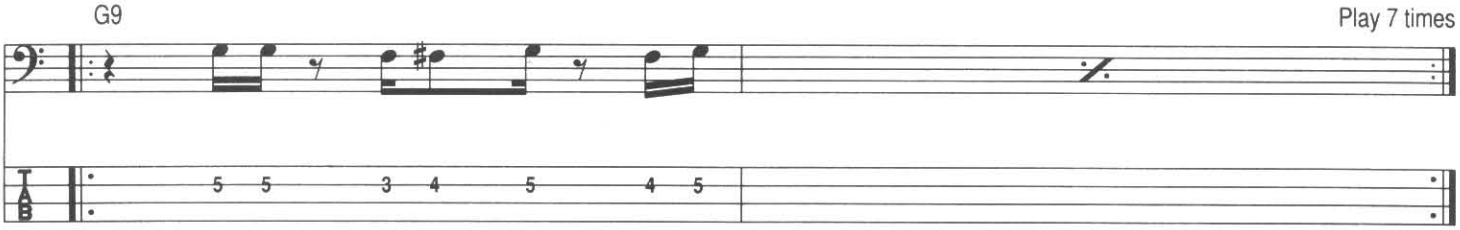
LAST TIME TO BRIDGE

D Dorian



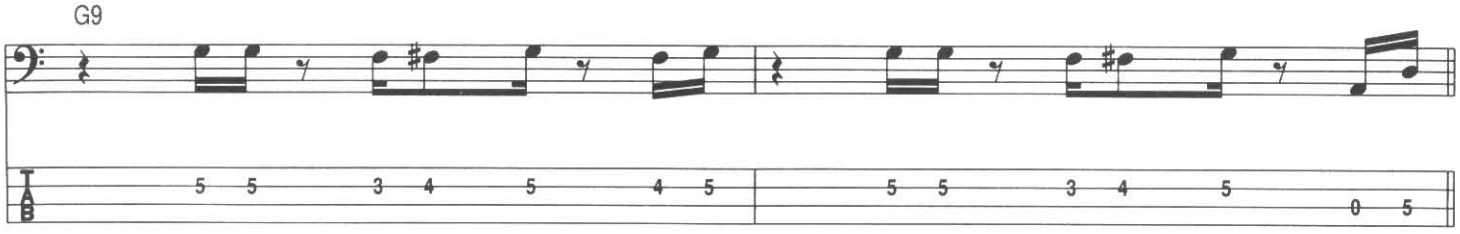
BRIDGE

G9 — Play 7 times



LAST TIME LEADING BACK TO VERSE

G9



JIMMY NOLEN AND ALFONZO "COUNTRY" KELLUM •guitars•

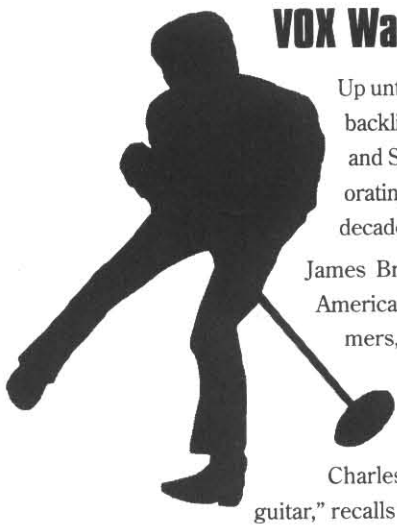
CD 1 45 TRACK

When listening to this track, it sounds as if one of these two guitarists played the verse and then handed the reins over to the other guy for the bridge. It's a very seamless transition, but the vastly different tone and touch of these two parts makes this scenario very probable. According to "Country" Kellum, two different guitar parts *were* simultaneously going on in this tune but that doesn't mean both parts made it to vinyl. "Sometimes when James and them got finished mixing tunes that Jimmy and I cut on, we'd have trouble hearing parts that we knew we had played," explains "Country." "Like sometimes you might just hear one guitar part, but that wasn't necessarily all that we played. Jimmy and I were almost always playing two different parts at the same time. It wasn't like one of us laid out during a certain section of the tune while the other one played."

Jimmy's muted, single-note figure made the grade on the verses while "Country's" part wound up being buried or muted. The situation reverses on the bridge, when all you can hear is "Country's" percolatin' rhythm. "You can tell that's me," he points out. "I always tried to play a part that kept things flowing." The fact that it does flow so well is a tribute to "Country's" absolute mastery of this idiom. The seemingly limitless variations in touch would make most guitarists tighten up the feel and start rushing. In the space of eight bars and just one chord change, we find slides, scratches, single-notes, double stops, three- and four-note voicings, legato and staccato notes, accented notes, ringing notes, choked notes, and probably even a few other permutations that I missed altogether. It should be murder to play, but "Country" makes it sound completely natural and relaxed.

Note: In later verses and variations, Jimmy Nolen sometimes reverses bars one and two of the verse vamp (the "F" and "D" on beat "four" now occur in the first bar instead of the two scratches). ◆

VOX Wasn't Just The Sound Of The Beatles

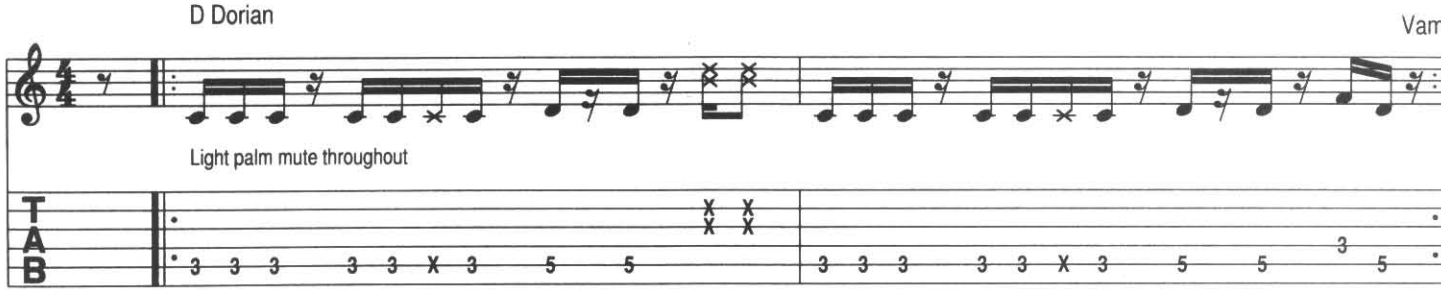


Up until the end of 1965, a James Brown stage looked much like the domain of any other R&B act. The backline was populated by the customary lineup of Fender and Gibson guitars, basses, and amplifiers, and Slingerland, Rogers, Ludwig, or Gretsch drums. By the end of the year, however, some set redecorating had been done. Soul Brother #1 got an endorsement deal. For much of the remainder of the decade, the new "look" and sound of the drum, bass, and guitar sections was VOX.

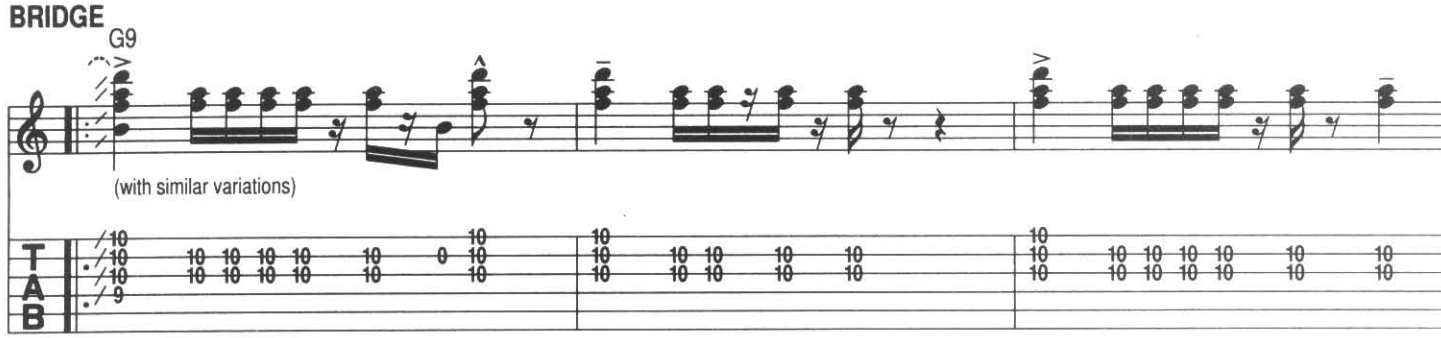
James Brown's sidemen transformed this uniquely British instrumental tradition into a singularly American sound from the streets, but the band's reaction to the new order was mixed. The drummers, in particular, were less than ecstatic when all the drum sets were changed over to VOX. "You had to work too hard to make them sound good," laments "Jab'o" Starks. The guitarists and bassists were split in their opinions. While Jimmy Nolen remained loyal to his Gibson ES 335 and Bernard Odum still played his trusty '56 P-Bass, both "Country" Kellum and Charles Sherrell defected to VOX, as did "Catfish" Collins several years later. "They made a great guitar," recalls "Catfish." "I used a red, semi-hollow model with an onboard fuzz, a wah wah, a repeater, and a bunch of other gadgets."

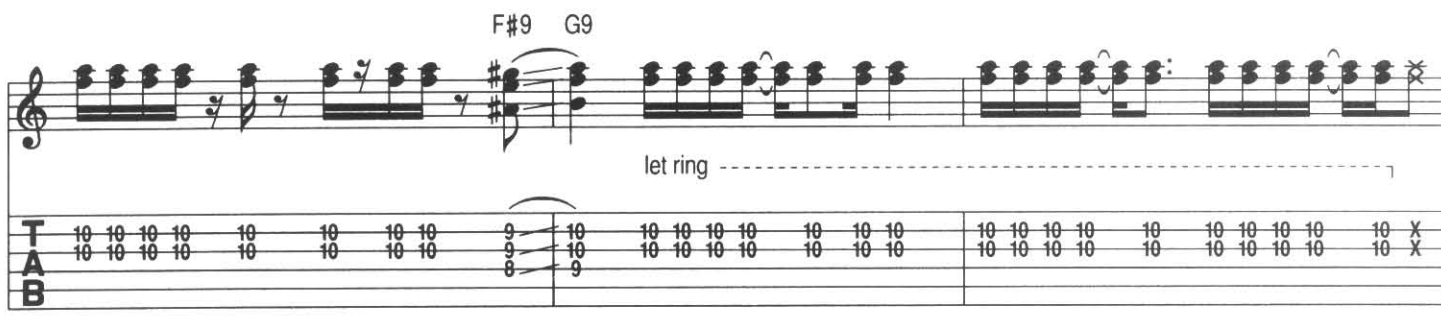
The guitars and basses were mostly solid-body teardrop or pentagonal shaped instruments from VOX's Mark IV and Phantom lines. Several semi-hollow, ES335 shaped Viper model guitars and Spyder IV basses were also used. The 1968 VOX catalog boasts that the 120-watt, four 12" speaker Beatle Deluxe model was "the choice of James Brown," but various stage photos of JB's guitarists also show them with several other amps from the VOX line. The bass amps were usually piggyback, 120-watt Westminster models with an 18" speaker, a built-in tuner, and VOX's patented "bass intensifier" circuitry. By the end of the decade, the VOX experiment was abandoned as Fender, Ampeg, Ludwig, and Slingerland reclaimed the stage.

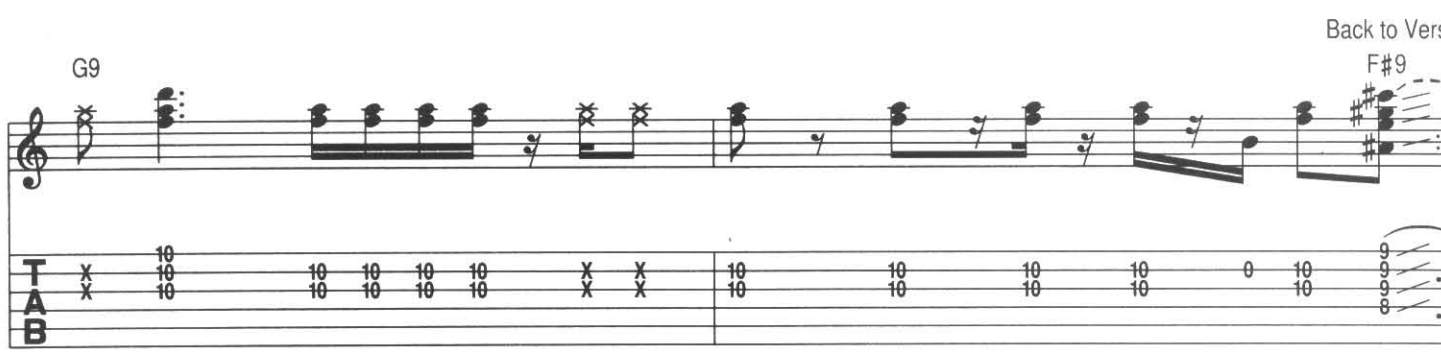
VERSE (♩ = 100)



BRIDGE







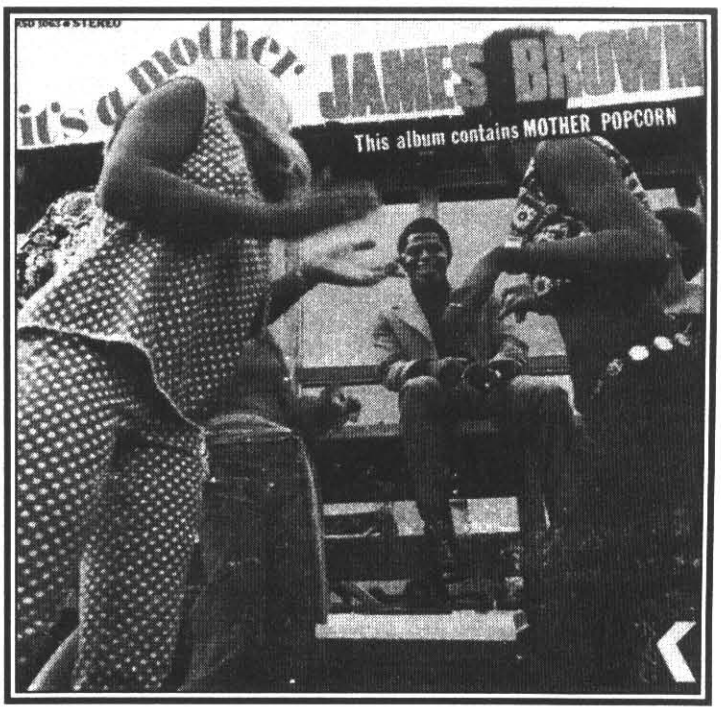
chapter 12

MOTHER POPCORN

recorded may, 1969

What do you get when you combine the latest dance craze, a pet name for a big booty, and a hastily scheduled recording session? If you're you or me, you get a studio bill for $539.72 and some weird looks from the engineer. If you're James Brown, you get a hit like "Mother Popcorn." Brown, seeking to capitalize on the popularity of The Popcorn, 1969's hottest dance, combined it with his favorite term for a woman's posterior ("mother"). While the logic of this compositional merger may escape many of us, it didn't escape the *Billboard* charts. Within a few short weeks, "Mother Popcorn" knocked out Jr. Walker's "What Does It Take (To Win Your Love)" to gain possession of the #1 spot.

Under the time constraints of an unscheduled, last-minute recording session, bandleader "Pee Wee" Ellis reached into the past and called on an old friend to serve as the foundation of this arrangement. Waiting in a downtown Cincinnati music store for a ride to the studio, "Pee Wee" realized that a slightly sped up version of the "Cold Sweat" groove was the right feel for this dance-driven track. It also set the stage for what may be the most brutal and physically demanding horn chart in JB's repertoire. With six-plus minutes of aggressive, non-stop blowing, the chops of Maceo, St. Clair Pinckney, Fred Wesley, and the rest of the horn section must have been reduced to jelly by the time the red recording light went off. I guess "Pee Wee" wanted to leave his band mates with something to remember him by. He would depart shortly after the song hit #1. ◆



VERSE (♩ = 117)

D7

Guitar 1

Light palm mute throughout

Guitar 2

mute fretted notes with left hand so that practically no pitch is sounded, only a percussive attack.

Bass

Play cue-sized notes when going to Bridge

Drums

Play 4 times

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

BRIDGE C9 F9 C9

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

1. F9 2. F9

Back to Verse

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

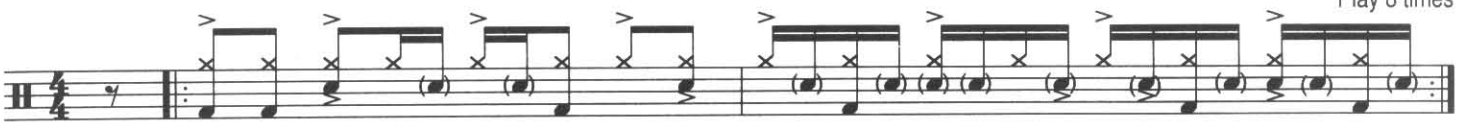
CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD •drums•

Clyde Stubblefield follows in the footsteps of a venerable James Brown band tradition established by Melvin Parker earlier in the decade. Clyde came of age in this tune with the completion of *his* drum trilogy. The final chapter of an experiment started with "Cold Sweat" and refined in "I Got The Feelin'" is now fully consummated in "Mother Popcorn."

The kick and snare drum groove is a combination of the various patterns established in the previous two songs, but the complexity of the ghost note and accented left-hand shadings on the snare drum raises Clyde's level of artistry another notch. The hi-hat pattern is a major departure from his work in "Cold Sweat" and "I Got the Feelin'." The eighth-note feel remains the same, but the "skipping," open-and-closed idea is replaced by accented downbeats and ghosted (almost inaudible) upbeats. The bridge groove is identical to the verse pattern except for the first downbeat of the phrase. At this spot, the bridge receives a different type of emphasis when the two eighth-note kick drums on beat "one" are replaced with a single accented snare. ◆

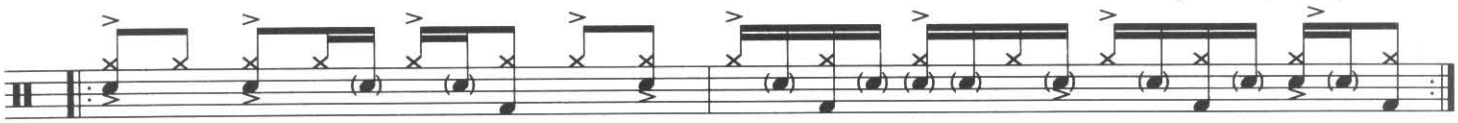
VERSE (♩ = 117)

Play 8 times



BRIDGE

Play 4 times, then back to Verse

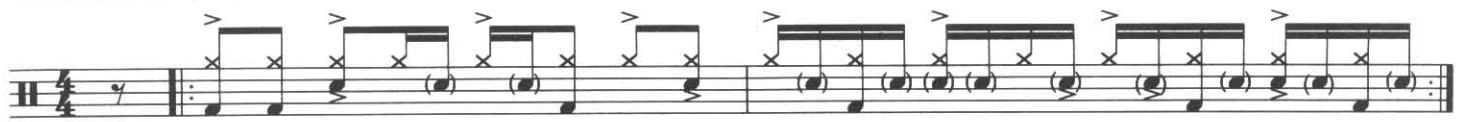


DRUM LESSON

BASIC VERSE GROOVE

INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE

CHARLES SHERRELL •bass•

The feel of this tune was not the only element cloned from "Cold Sweat." The tonal center of "D" is exactly the same, the C9 to F9 bridge is identical, and the bass and guitar parts also bear a striking resemblance to the earlier tune. Charles Sherrell's bass lines in "Mother Popcorn" closely follow the model set up by Bernard Odum in "Cold Sweat," although Sherrell's version is a bit more syncopated, particularly in the second bar of the bridge. The lines themselves are constructed around root-fifth movement on the odd-numbered bars, and chromatic walk ups from the chordal third to the fifth in the even ones. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 117)

D7

Play cue-sized note when going to Bridge

Play 4 times

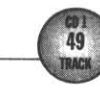
BRIDGE

C9 F9 C9

1. F9

2. F9

Back to Verse



Harmonically, the biggest dissimilarity between "Cold Sweat" and "Mother Popcorn" is not in the rhythm section but in the horns. As in the earlier tune, the guitars in the verses give no indication as to the modality of the tune. Jimmy Nolen is just playing roots, fifths, and sevenths, and "Country's" scratch part doesn't have enough of a pitch to help define any harmonic elements. The horns, on the other hand, are flat-out nailing a D7♯9 voicing. In "Cold Sweat," they played a stock Dorian vamp.

Nolen and "Country" have given subtle rhythmic variations to their verse patterns and changed some of the voicings on the bridge, but the end result is basically the same "Cold Sweat" groove. To get the smoothest and most balanced feel out of the verse's first guitar part, lightly mute the strings with your right palm and play everything with a downpick except for the last five notes in the fourth bar, which should be picked D-U-U-U-D. The scratch rhythm on the second guitar part should be played as a continuous three-note picking pattern (D-U-D, D-U-D, D-U-D, D-U-D, etc).

(Note: A third guitarist named Kenny Poole was also listed as having participated in this recording session, but there are only two audible parts and these are clearly Nolen and Kellum.. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 117)

D7

Gtr. 1

Light palm mute throughout

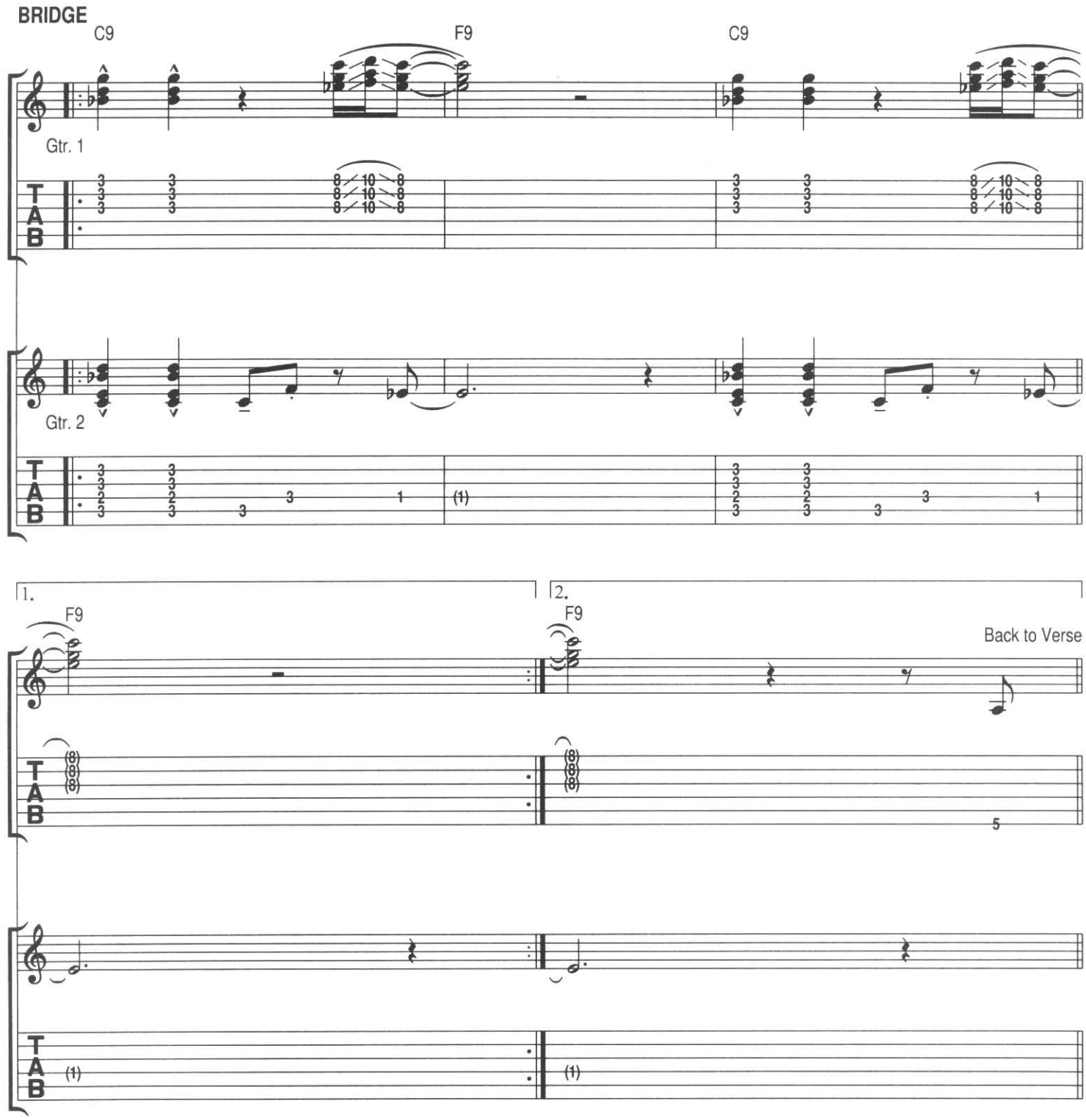
Gtr. 2

mute fretted notes with left hand so that practically no pitch is sounded, only a percussive attack.

Play 4 times

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2


BRIDGE
C9
F9
C9
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
1.
2.
F9
F9
Back to Verse

chapter 13

FUNKY DRUMMER

recorded november, 1969

"**The name of this tune** is 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'... 'The Funky Drummer'." James Brown's voice may have faded out at the end of this recording, but Clyde Stubblefield's drums never stopped. Three decades later, they continue to reverberate in thousands of hip-hop recordings that use samples of this classic drum performance as their heartbeat.

One of the more improvisational and complex tunes in James Brown's catalog, this non-stop grooveathon is actually two separate musical ideas connected by a three-bar interlude. The first section, in B major, follows a two-measure intro (the second bar of which is a measure of 2/4 played over a D♭9 harmony) and is played during the first three minutes and twelve seconds of the tune. At this point, the three-bar interlude occurs, which is essentially a two-bar transition over a D9 harmony with the first bar of the original D♭9 intro tacked on at the end. This sets up the D♭ major section of the tune.

Amidst the intricacy of the formal road map of this arrangement, Brown throws the kitchen sink at us. Directing traffic while playing some phat, ultra-funky organ fills, JB also pushes individual band members into the spotlight by featuring two different Maceo Parker tenor solos and the celebrated, eight-bar Clyde Stubblefield drum solo that has become the holy grail of samplers and rap artists throughout the world. ◆

PATTERN 1 (♩ = 86)

B9 E9 B9 E9 B9 Vamp

Guitar 1

(see Gtr. lesson for additional Gtr. variations)

Guitar 2

Bass

Drum Groove A

Drums

Drum Groove B

Drums

PATTERN 2

D♭9 G♭9 D♭9 G♭9

Guitar 1

Bass

Drum Groove A

Drums

Drum Groove B

Drums

D♭9 G♭9 D♭9 G♭9 Vamp

Guitar 1

Bass

Drums

Drums

CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD •drums•

If you're an aspiring R&B drummer, or any drummer for that matter, this is the main event. There is enough material in this track to write two drum books. James Brown may have thought he was giving Clyde Stubblefield a solo in this tune, but in reality, the entire track is a drum solo. Clyde's most common patterns are shown in the transcriptions below, but he's also playing hundreds of other equally dynamic variations.

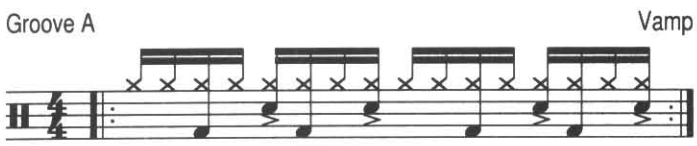
"Funky Drummer" is a drastic departure from the "Cold Sweat"—"I Got The Feelin'"—"Mother Popcorn" concept. The ever-present ghosted snare notes are eliminated entirely in Pattern One (they return in Pattern Two), accented snare backbeats are placed squarely on "two" and "four" instead of being displaced, and the hi-hat pattern has shifted from eighth-notes to sixteenth-notes while incorporating some oddly placed openings and closings.

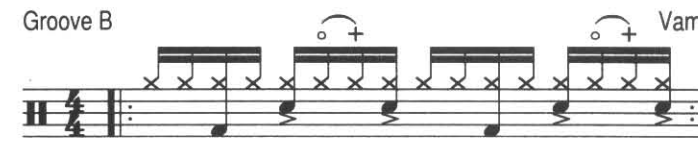
Pattern One is found throughout the first three minutes and twelve seconds of the tune. Following the return of the intro, Clyde spends the next two minutes gradually developing and evolving into Pattern Two as he plays through a free-form jam between the rhythm section, JB's organ and vocal ad-libs, and Maceo Parker's second solo. The new pattern starts off with the famous twenty-second sampled groove. (After James exclaims, "I wanna walk the floor. One, two, three, four, get it!" at the 5:35 mark.) The original single version of this tune did not contain the drum solo because it ended at 5:35, just before the solo began.

When you take into consideration the technical demands of the tempo, the ghost notes, and the hi-hat openings and closings, the effortless feel that Clyde is able to throw down is all the more remarkable. It's one of the reasons his groove has been sampled so many times as opposed to being re-created by other drummers. They can copy Clyde's notes, but they can't reproduce the feel and spirit of his performance.

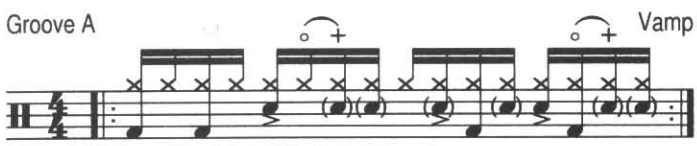
Clyde left shortly after recording "Funky Drummer," but returned in June 1970 to perform some live dates and participate in a few studio sessions. In November, after cutting "Get Up, Get Into It, Get Involved," he departed once again. Over the course of the previous year, The Godfather's focus had gradually shifted to "Jab'o" Starks, but Clyde had already left an indelible mark on the band. Aside from other factors that were behind his departure, Clyde's virtuoso performance on "Funky Drummer" may have shown him that it was time to move on. It wasn't humanly possible to top what he had just done. ◆

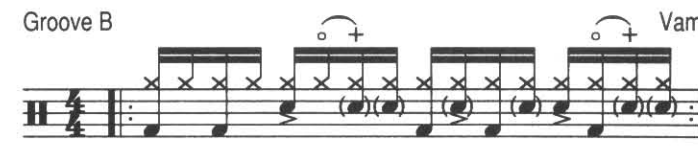
PATTERN 1 (♩ = 86) (GROOVES A AND B ARE INTERCHANGEABLE)





PATTERN 2 (GROOVES A AND B ARE INTERCHANGEABLE)



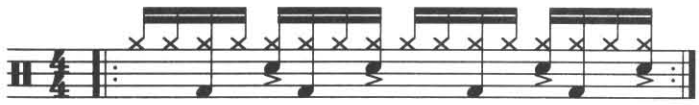


DRUM LESSON

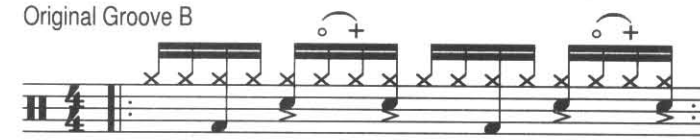
CD 2 TRACK 2

PATTERN 1

Original Groove A

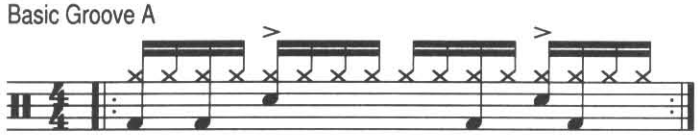


Original Groove B

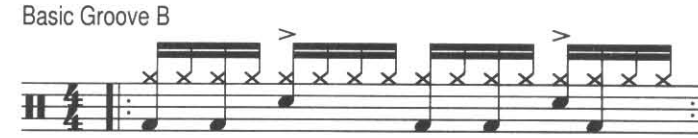


PATTERN 2

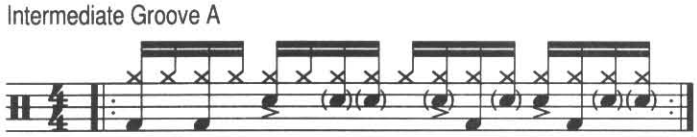
Basic Groove A



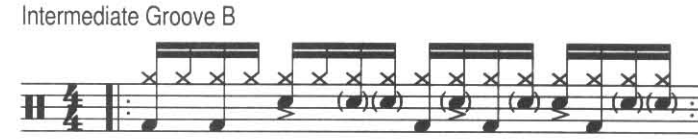
Basic Groove B



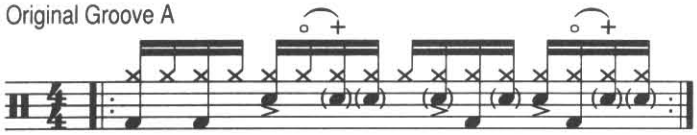
Intermediate Groove A



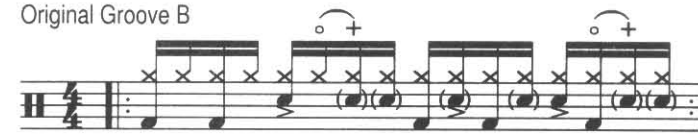
Intermediate Groove B



Original Groove A



Original Groove B



CHARLES SHERRELL •bass•

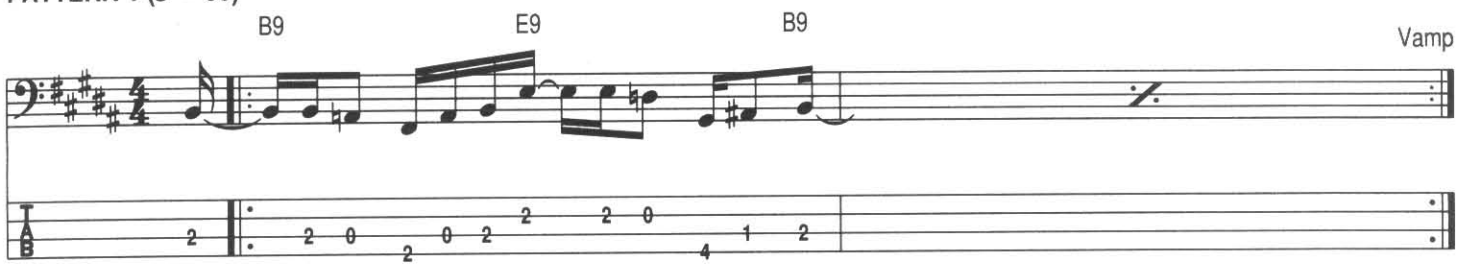
Don't expect to hear these bass lines laid down in the no-variation, repetitive manner we've seen on most of the James Brown bass lines so far. Similar to Clyde's free-form, variation approach, Charles Sherrell uses these lines as basic themes for exploration. Pattern One—in the transcribed form notated here—is played verbatim for a good portion of the first half of "Funky Drummer," but Pattern Two takes a while to develop. After two minutes of intensive jamming on the D♭9 to G♭7 change, Charles finally begins to play this line in its fully developed configuration directly after the eight-bar drum solo.

If you ever wondered why your bass teacher force-fed you arpeggio studies, you finally have your answer. Charles Sherrell's "Funky Drummer" bass patterns look like someone took a conventional broken chord etude from a Rufus Reid or Simandl bass method and funked it up. While both Patterns One and Two share the common melodic trait of being almost exclusively built around chordal roots, thirds, fifths, and flat sevenths, they are radically dissimilar from a rhythmic point of view.

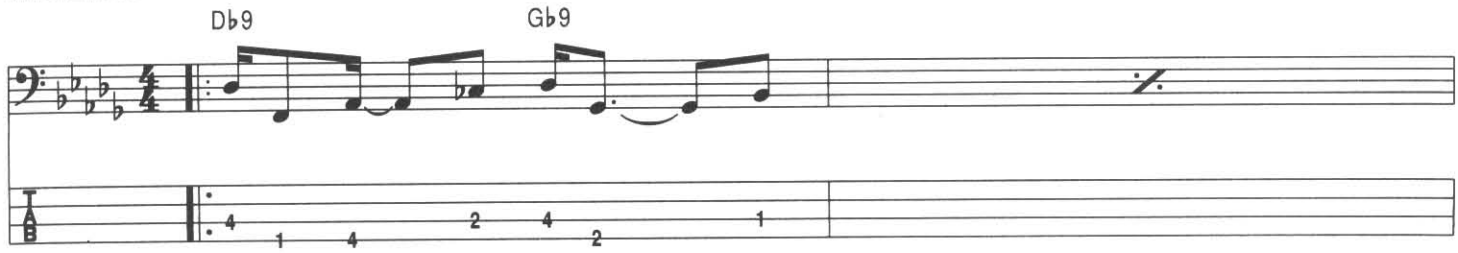
Pattern One anticipates every chord change by a sixteenth-note. In contrast, Pattern Two lands squarely on the downbeats of the D♭9 and G♭7 chord changes, but in the first two measures, the G♭7 is a deceptive resolution. Charles actually delays the root of the G♭7 by initially landing on the fifth of the chord (the "D♭") and arriving a sixteenth-note late on the root (the "G♭"). The chord changes in the third and fourth bars are approached with a mixed bag of downbeats and anticipations.

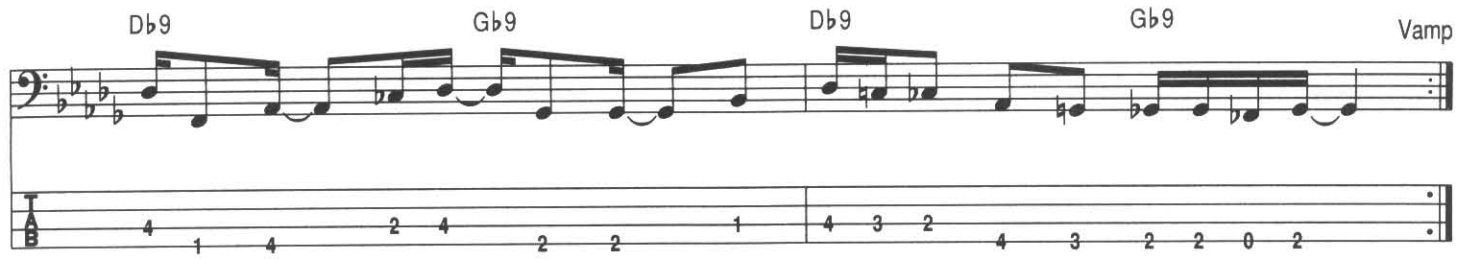
Pattern Two—which presents a veritable thesaurus of every conceivable eighth and sixteenth-note permutation known to man—takes a much more syncopated approach as a whole than the first pattern. In fact, it's the most complex rhythmic bass line in this book. Make Clyde's steady hi-hat figure your best friend if you want to lock in with this groove. As if you didn't have enough technical considerations to worry about at this point, let me lay one more piece of advice on you: You'd better eat your Wheaties. Seven minutes of this kind of material is a brutal workout for your hands. ◆

PATTERN 1 (♩ = 86)



PATTERN 2





Jimmy Nolen was always a blues guitarist at heart, so playing a simple pentatonic lick like the two-bar motif found in Pattern One of "Funky Drummer" was right up his alley. The only difference was, if he were playing with a blues act, the lick would be played once or twice and then he'd move on to the next improvised line. But with James Brown, his role was to play a line like this over and over until the boss was ready to move into the next section of the tune. If that meant five minutes on the same two bars, that's what Jimmy gave him. On the original recording, Jimmy hints at the finished phrase for the first forty seconds or so until he finally establishes it in its complete form. Once he's locked in, you'd have a better shot at getting a soupbone out of the jaws of a pit bull than you would at getting him to break his groove.

Playing these two bars cleanly and in the pocket is not as easy as it looks because the pick has to cross back and forth over the strings. Not until the last three notes of the figure are any pick attacks found on the same string. The best two ways to go about playing this line would be to start with an up-pick and then play all the following notes with an alternate style (down-up, down-up, etc.) or, start with a down-pick and always move the pick in the direction of the next string. In this case the picking sequence would be D,U,D,U,U,D,U—D,U,U,U,D,U.

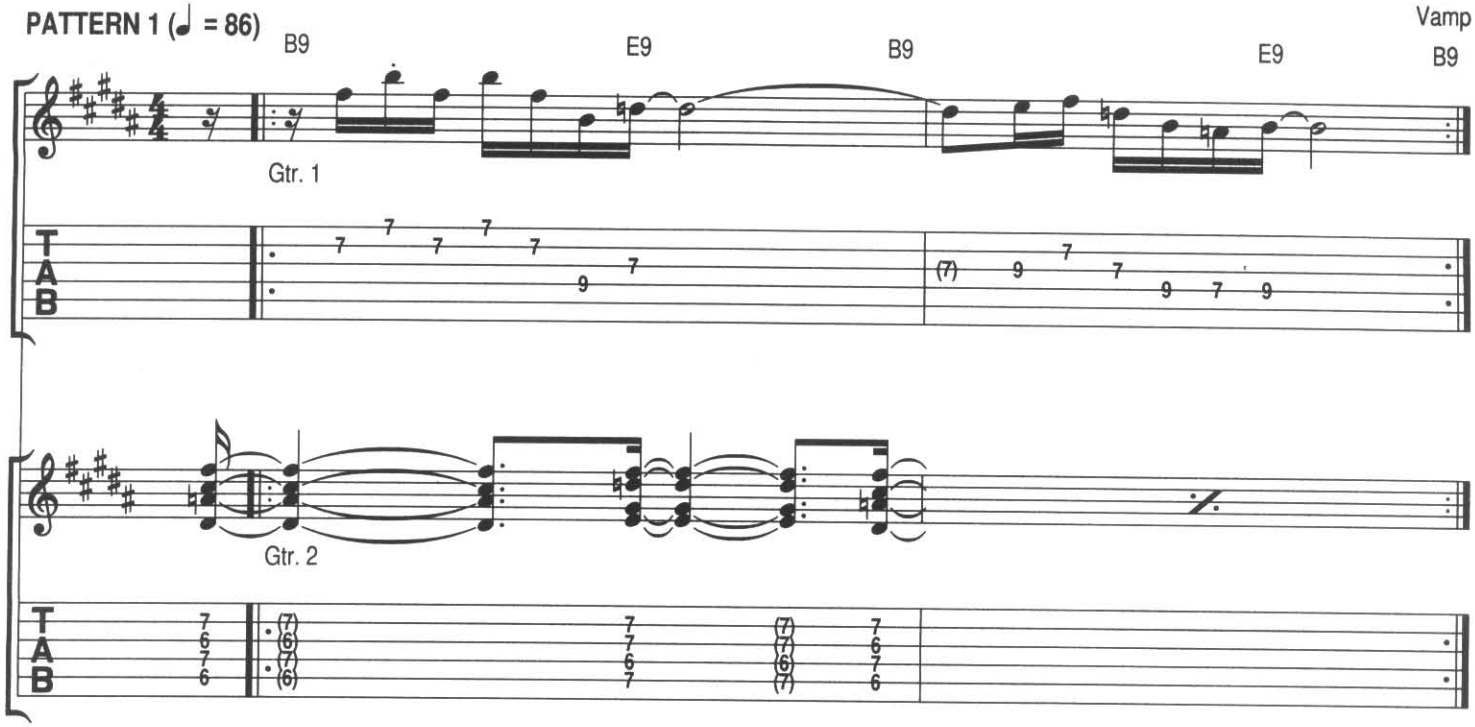
Alfonzo Kellum is the only member of the band providing a harmonic foundation on this tune. Everyone else is playing lines. His simple sustained pad of dominant 9th chords in Pattern One is softly played in the background and anticipates the harmonic changes on the last sixteenth-note of beats "two" and "four." The key to playing this part is to lock in with the snare drum and bass which, by accenting those same rhythmic anticipations, help to emphasize the chord changes and propel the groove forward.

Jimmy Nolen begins Pattern Two after James instructs the band to "Take me into the change," shortly after the three-minute mark. For the first minute and forty-five seconds of this new section, Jimmy explores and develops the basic idea, finally settling in on the finished version at the five-minute mark. As usual, his trademark 9th voicing is the central character. ◆

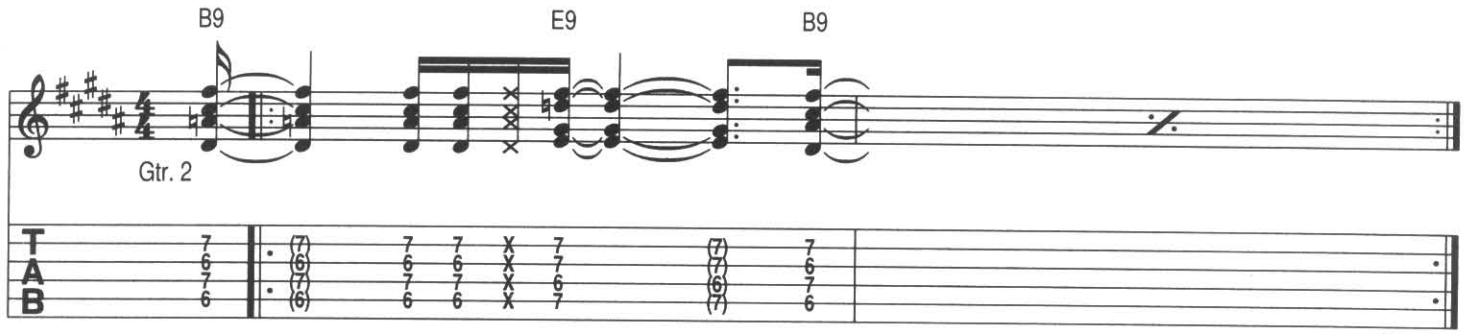
James Brown and James Brown Band (ca. 1969). Jimmy Nolen (guitar), and "Jab'o" Starks (drums).

© Redfern/Retna Ltd.

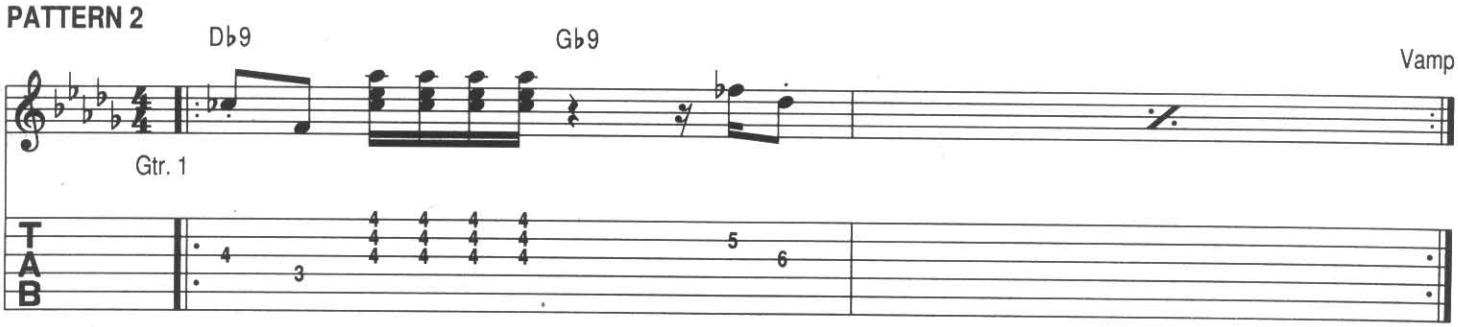
PATTERN 1 (♩ = 86)



PATTERN 1 VARIATION



PATTERN 2



chapter 14

GET UP (I FEEL LIKE BEING A) SEX MACHINE

recorded april, 1970

In the film world, the most famous mutiny in history occurred on *The Bounty*. In the world of R&B, the most celebrated uprising happened on the good ship *Licking Stick*. Frustrated by low wages, shoddy travel accommodations, and the incessant fines levied by James Brown for violations ranging from lateness and musical gaffes to unshined shoes and excessive dandruff, the band, led by recent returnee Melvin Parker, went on strike the afternoon of a March 1970 concert date in Columbus, Georgia. By 6:00 P.M., it was obvious that they were not going to back down. Brown, refusing to give in to their demands for more money, sent his personal Lear jet to Cincinnati to fly in replacements. As he recalls in his autobiography, "I wouldn't give in to a threat like that—never. You cannot lose control of your group. Once you give in to that kind of thing, there's no stopping it."

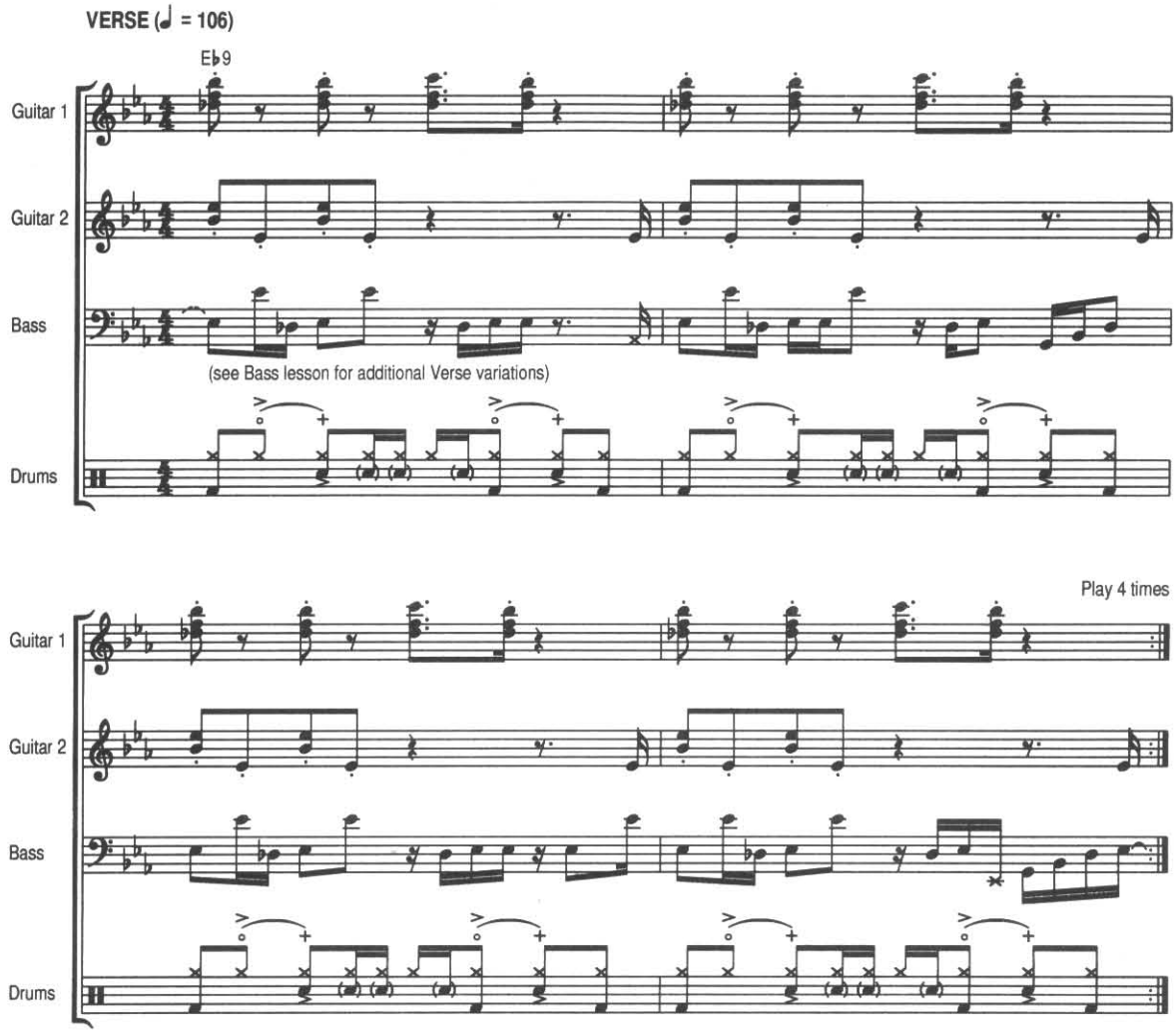
Hoping to avoid cancellation of the sold-out show, an anxious Soul Brother #1 sat backstage awaiting the arrival of his new recruits. Upon their belated landing, Brown immediately fired the old band and sent the sacrificial lambs out for the slaughter. With no time for rehearsal or even a sound check, only loyalist veterans "Jab'o" Starks and Bobby Byrd were on hand to help them get through the show. Taking the stage in front of a hostile and restless audience that had been transformed by a two-hour wait into a lynch mob, Brown and his new disciples somehow limped through the evening without the loss of life or limb.

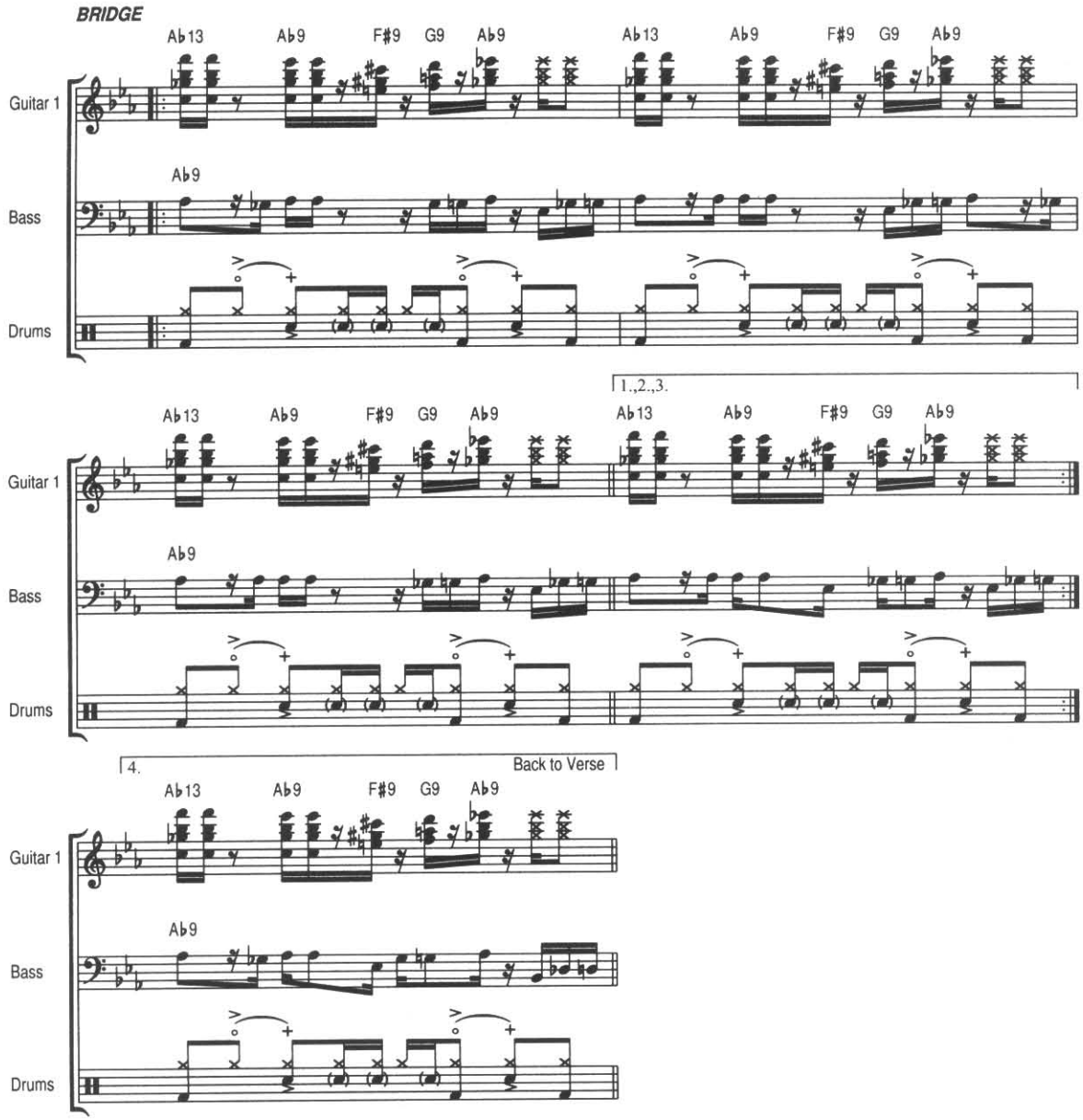
With the new band's initial trauma behind them, they were now able to go about the business of establishing their own turf. Bassist William "Bootsy" Collins and his brother, guitarist Phelps "Catfish" Collins, had been on the periphery of the King Records studio scene for several years, recording with Arthur Prysock, Kay Robinson, and even on a few James Brown productions. They were also regulars on the local Cincinnati club circuit with their own band, The Pacemakers. Brown enlisted the entire unit, horns, drums, and all, and changed their name to The New Breed before settling on The J.B.'s.

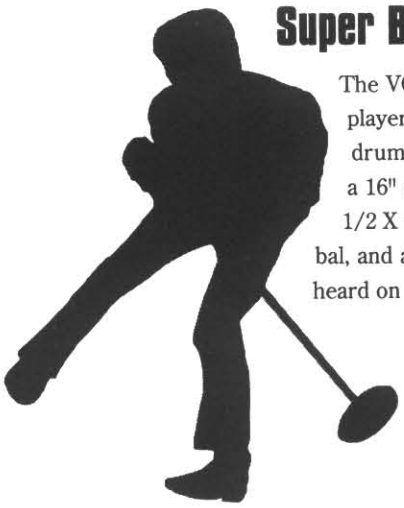
The streamlined economy of this band had an instant impact. The six to seven horn and multiple guitar approach of The James Brown Orchestra was now cut down to just three horn players and one guitar for the J.B.'s. "Get Up I Feel Like Being A Sex Machine" was the first outgrowth of this new sound, but the song's genesis came from an older tradition. James Brown was still recycling grooves. Road manager Allan Leeds had asked Brown about a new live version of "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose" that the band began to perform and was told, "Oh, that's my new tune." Alan recalls, "I didn't understand how a two-year-old record could be his new tune. Sure enough there were licks I'd heard in 'Give It Up', only this time, the song was named 'Get Up (I Feel Like Being A) Sex Machine'." ◆

GET UP (I FEEL LIKE BEING A) SEX MACHINE •master score•

CD 2 5 TRACK







Super Bad Drum Sets

The VOX endorsement deal gave a uniform look to the drum kits JB's drummers played, but the players asserted their individuality in their choice of the setup. "Jab'o" Starks preferred one kick drum, two mounted toms, one floor tom, a snare drum, 14" hi-hats, 18" and 22" ride cymbals, and a 16" crash cymbal. Clyde's setup was a bit more sparse and economical: one 22" kick drum, a 5 1/2 X 14" snare drum, one 9 X 13" mounted tom, a 16" X 16" floor tom, 14" hi-hats, a 20" ride cymbal, and an 18" crash. Although the toms were used sporadically in the live shows, they were rarely heard on the recordings. (The drum solo from "Cold Sweat" is a notable exception.)

JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

CD 2 5 TRACK

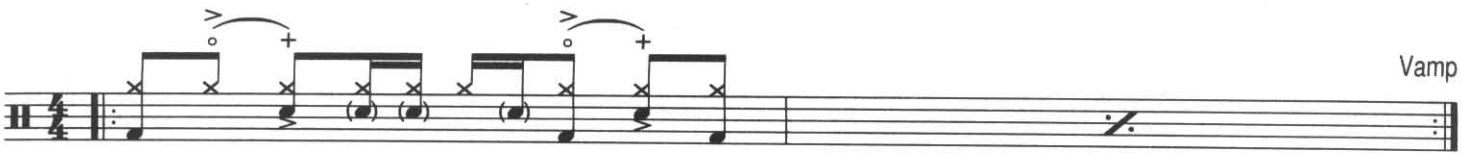
By this time, it should be quite obvious that drum trilogies are more than just a tradition with James Brown's drummers; they're a rite of passage. There must be an unwritten rule in his band that states: "Until you have developed a signature drum groove over the course of three songs, you are unworthy of your drum seat." Believe me, Melvin Parker, Clyde Stubblefield, and "Jab'o" Starks didn't plan this out to give music analysts something to write about. Nevertheless, the coincidence of all three of them following the same script is certainly intriguing. With a concept started in "Licking Stick," "Jab'o" Starks presents the second installment of his signature groove in "Sex Machine." His three-song experiment would reach maturity and be completed in "Super Bad."

All three tunes contain the exact same kick drum and eighth-note, open-and-closed hi-hat pattern. ("Sex Machine" has a minor hi-hat variation with an added sixteenth-note on the "and" of beat "two.") The individuality of each of the three patterns is developed through the snare drum. The highly syncopated, Latin-influenced sidestick of "Licking Stick" has been replaced in "Sex Machine" by straight-ahead, accented backbeats on "two" and "four," with a few ghost notes thrown in. As we'll see in Chapter Seventeen, "Super Bad's" accented, displaced snare drum will use the common ground of the kick drum and hi-hat pattern established in the first two songs as a foundation to take this groove in a completely new and unique direction.

"Sex Machine" is a study in stamina and concentration. Once you get past the technical, independence of hands and feet problems, you are left with what is essentially a one-bar pattern that must be played verbatim for five-plus minutes. (The bridge is the same exact pattern as the verse except the extra sixteenth-note hi-hat on the "and" of beat "two" is deleted.) The challenge at this point becomes: "How do you sustain interest and energy without letting the repetitiveness of the pattern lull you into a cruise control type of stupor?" Having "Bootsy" Collins kicking your butt every other measure is a good start, but "Jab'o's" deep commitment to the feel and spirit of the music was all he really needed. As vague and esoteric as this may sound, it all begins to make sense when he points out, "Sometimes, we'd groove so hard, it like to scare me to death."

(Note: This particular "Sex Machine" needed some oil. Our old friend of five years back, the squeaky kick drum pedal, makes a triumphant return.) ◆

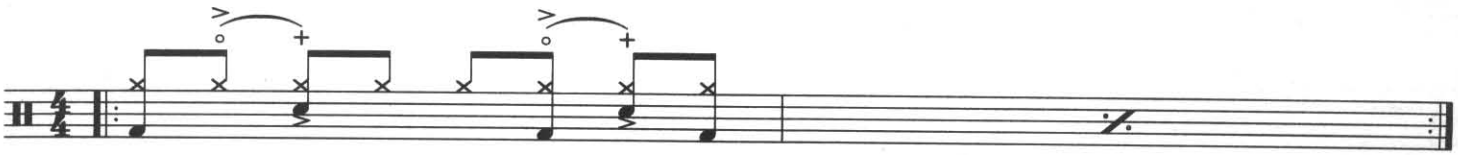
VERSE AND BRIDGE (♩ = 106)



DRUM LESSON

CD 2 6 TRACK

BASIC VERSE AND BRIDGE GROOVE



ORIGINAL VERSE AND BRIDGE GROOVE

WILLIAM "BOOTSY" COLLINS •bass•

CD 2 7 TRACK

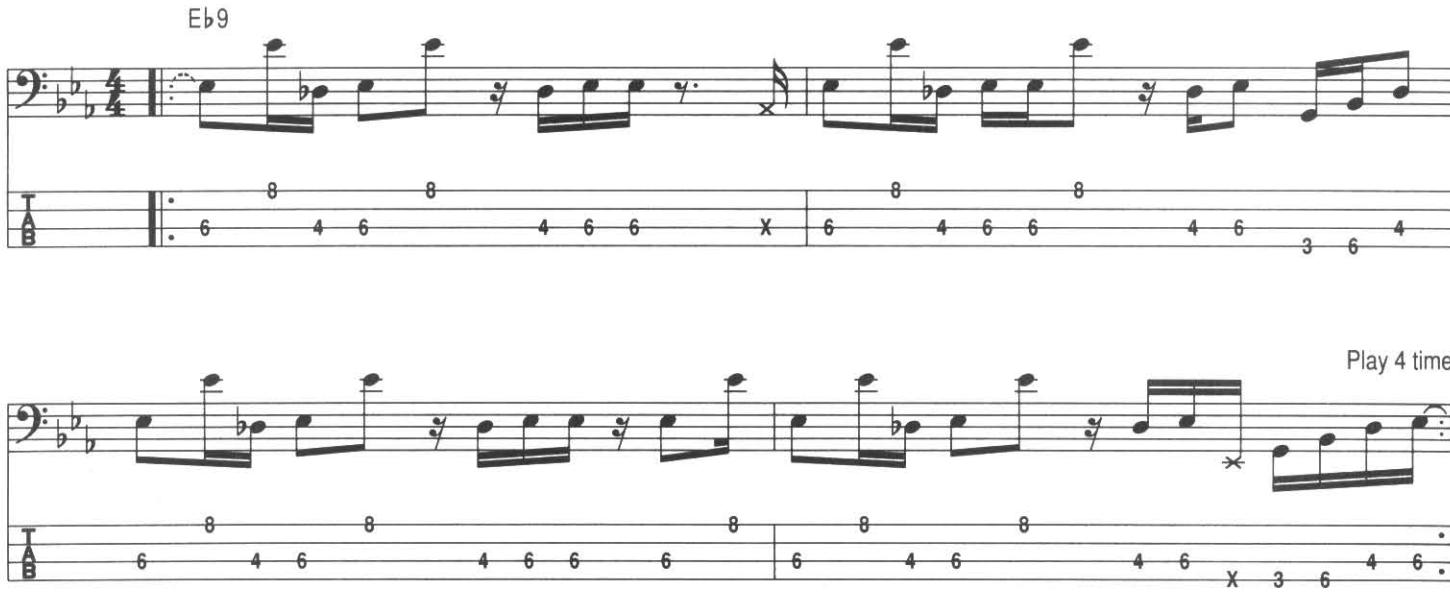
From the moment James Brown heard this gawky, 18-year-old bass virtuoso, he knew the bottom end of his music was about to be transformed overnight. He also knew that the greenish-blue, $29.00 Sears Silvertone guitar "Bootsy" Collins had converted into a bass was the wrong vehicle to get this new sound across. Within a few weeks, the pre-freakazoid "Bootsy" would be sporting a new Fender Jazz bass and an Ampeg SVT supplied by the boss. With his daredevil prowess and riveting stage presence, he was just beginning a career that would concurrently thrill music fans and terrorize every bass player on the planet.

With the exception of "Funky Drummer," you may have noticed that up until this point, every bass part in this book pretty much sticks to the script. Once the bassist settled in on his part, variations were subtle and infrequent. When "Bootsy" Collins took over the bass role in James Brown's band, that blueprint went out the window. There was no way to limit the torrential flow of outrageous bass lines erupting in his head. They just had to come out. The transcription to "Sex Machine" shown in this book could have contained dozens of other equally ingenious lines besides the two variations that have been included.

In spite of what seems to be a dangerous and highly flammable musical temperament, "Bootsy" was not just a reckless, out-of-control, riff dispenser. His work in "Sex Machine" shows great maturity, craftsmanship, and restraint in his choice of notes. "Bootsy" employs an endless stash of rhythmic variations to breathe life into a restricted melodic palette that is limited exclusively to chordal roots, thirds, fifths, and sevenths (combined with a few chromatic passing tone figures used to connect flat sevenths to roots, and thirds to fifths). The end result is an effortless stream of ideas that never rushes and is always locked up with the feel "Jab'o" Starks is laying down.

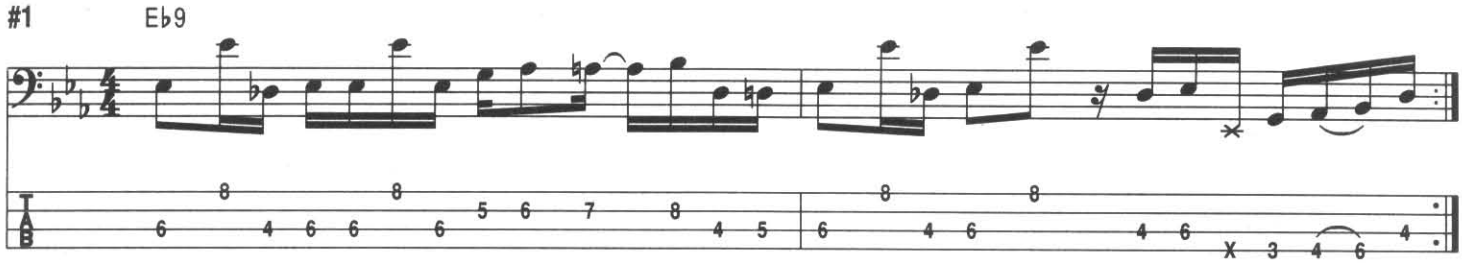
"Sex Machine" is a very physical bass line that can become a nightmare unless you take the time to carefully work out your fingering plan. The main trouble spots revolve around the octave "E♭'s" that begin almost every measure of the verse. The monkey wrench in the works (to what should be a very comfortable part) is the D♭. Your first finger is going to get a good workout as you constantly reach back out of position to grab this note at the fourth fret. The only place in these lines where "Bootsy" cuts us a technical break is on the open "E" and "A" string ghost notes, which are used to facilitate position shifts. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 106)

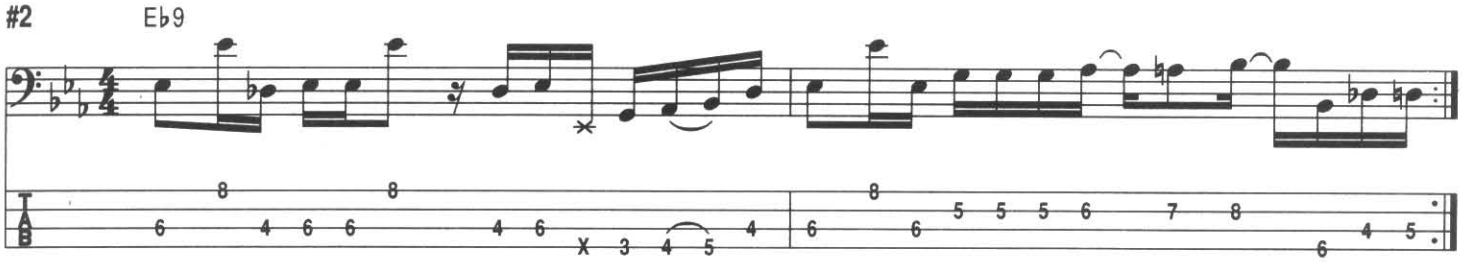


VERSE VARIATIONS

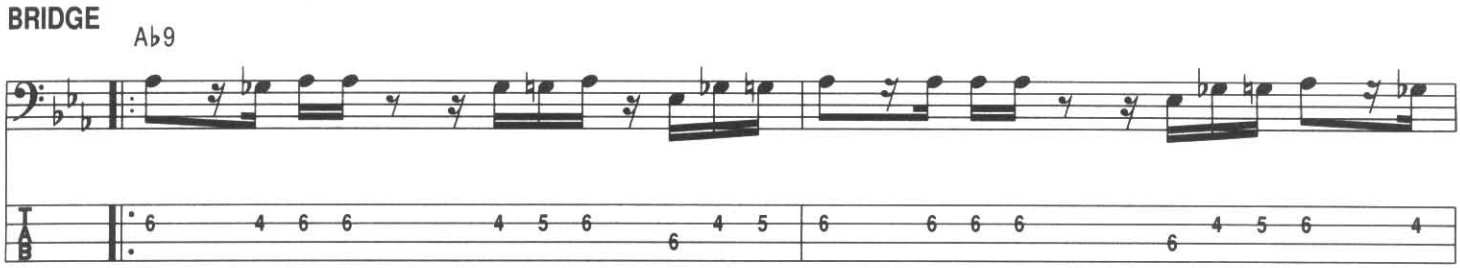
#1

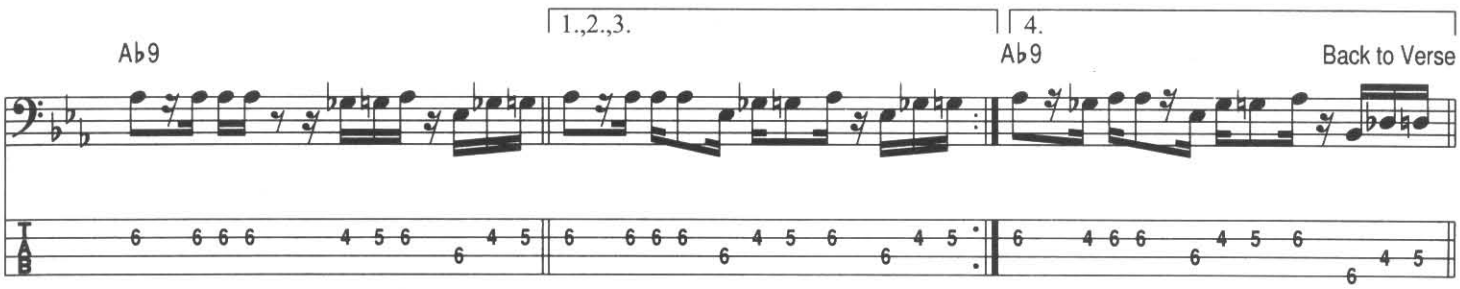


#2



BRIDGE





PHELPS "CATFISH" COLLINS •guitar•

CD 2 8 TRACK

If you ask "Catfish" Collins to describe his style, he'll tell you, "I play James Brown style." If you ask him who his influences are, he'll say one name: "James Brown." At this point it doesn't take a brain surgeon to figure out that Jimmy Nolen and Alfonzo Kellum are the backbone of his sound. With a little effort you can get "Catfish" to drop a few names like B.B. and Wes, but he's very single-minded when assigning credit to his mentor. "Catfish" explains, "We used to play a lot of his stuff so when I got with my own style, it was based on James Brown. That was the thing at the time. When we hooked up with him, we were in awe. We treated it like we were going to school."

"Catfish's" humility and unpretentious nature would lead you to believe that he's nothing more than a Nolen-Kellum wannabe, but that is completely false. While his "Sex Machine" guitar parts are structured around Jimmy Nolen's beloved E♭9th voicing, he also incorporates 13th chords, which were not part of the arsenals of either Nolen or Kellum—or any other James Brown guitarist up to this point. Additionally, the rhythms are unique to "Catfish," as are his feel and attack.

The second guitar part in the verse presents a bit of an enigma because "Catfish" was the only guitarist in the band at the time "Sex Machine" was recorded. That means the part would have had to have been an overdub. The problem with this explanation is that James Brown never overdubbed guitar parts during this eight-track period. It was all done live. Either "Catfish" played both parts simultaneously, there was another guitarist lurking around the studio, or the second guitar figure actually was a rare overdub. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 106)

E♭9

Play 4 times

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2

BRIDGE

A♭13 A♭9 F♯9 G9 A♭9

Play 4 times, then back to Verse

Gtr. 1

chapter 15

GOT TO GETCHA

recorded may, 1970

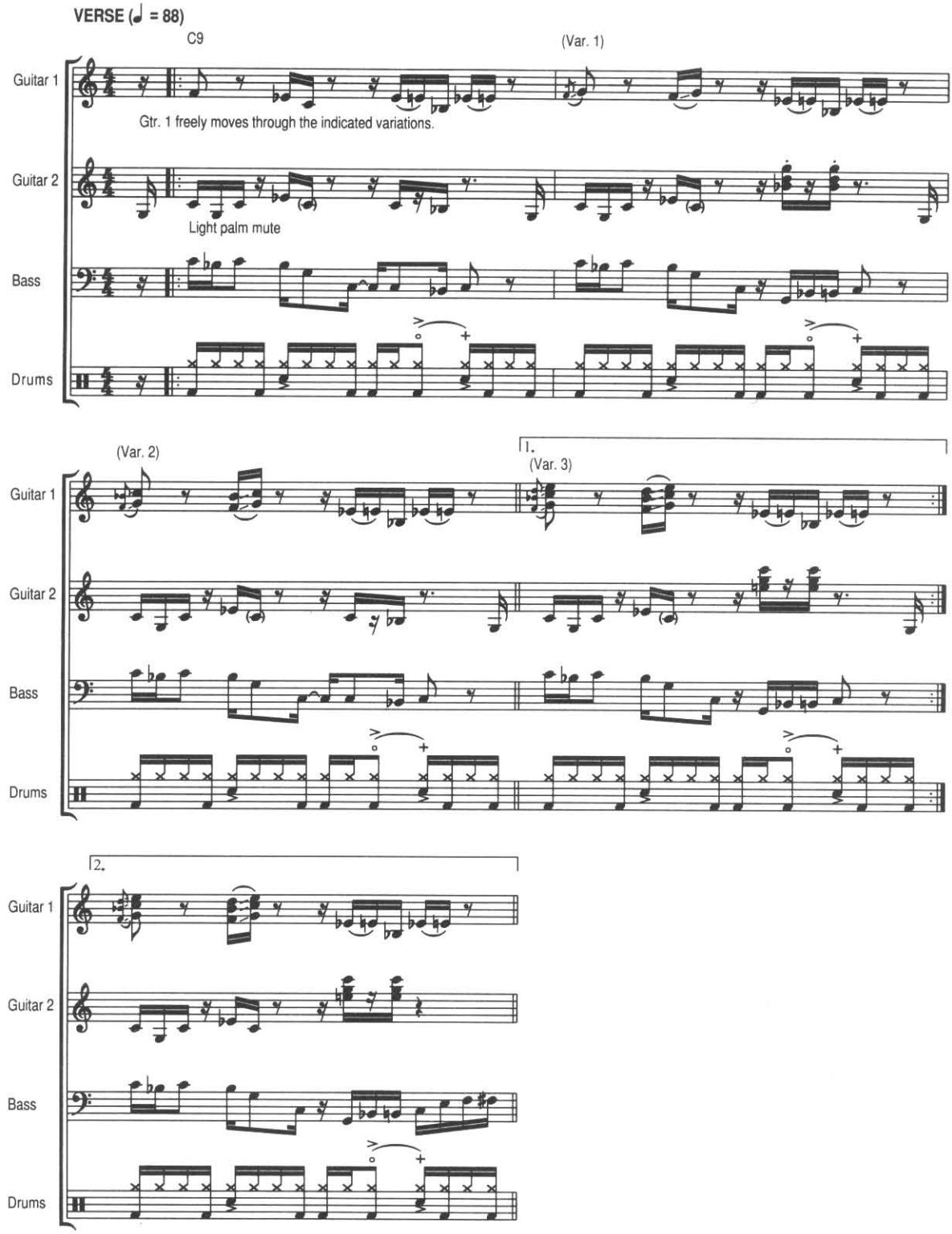
There was more to the 1970 band mutiny than just disenchantment over the pay scale and the lack of recognition for their work. Maceo Parker explained this to writer Cliff White in 1987 when he said, "I wouldn't say I rebelled. It's just that you grow and you get older. This is true in all professions. I think you come to the point where you need to get out and do your own thing. That's how I was feeling in 1970." The search for his "own thing" took shape later that year in the form of Maceo & All the King's Men, a band comprising Maceo and his brother Melvin, bassist Bernard Odum, guitarists Jimmy Nolen and Alfonzo Kellum, and horn players Richard Griffith, Joseph Davis, and L.D. Williams.

Their hopes and aspirations quickly took shape in "Got to Getcha," a marriage of their James Brown roots and their newly found independence. Whether it was the taste of freedom or the subliminal rebellious elements involved, Maceo and company definitely loosened it up on this track. After spending the previous decade recording the "every hair in place," controlled grooves of James Brown, the musicians welcomed the opportunity to play in a more relaxed and improvisational atmosphere.

The King's Men would break up in 1972 after having recorded two albums. The first one, which included "Got to Getcha" and "Funky Women," was released on Lelan Rogers' House of the Fox Records in 1970. Sales were disappointing, but the band remained undaunted and optimistic. Amidst allegations that James Brown had spent a considerable sum of money paying off DJ's to keep his ex-band's first album off the air, the determined King's Men cut a second album in 1971 for Nashville-based Excello Records. Regrettably, the result was the same. Lamenting a dream that was never realized, Jimmy Nolen told Lee Hildebrand and Henry Kaiser, "The King's Men was something that we tried to do that didn't come off as planned, but we gave it a hell of a try." Regardless of the albums' lack of commercial success, Maceo and company had achieved their primary goal. They were finally doin' their own thing. ◆

Courtsey of Jim Payne

Back row: Jimmy Nolen, Bernard Odum, and Art Lellum.
Front row: Maceo Parker, Melvin Parker (seated), and Richard "Kush" Griffith.


CD 2
9
TRACK
VERSE (♩ = 88)
C9
(Var. 1)
Guitar 1
Gtr. 1 freely moves through the indicated variations.
Guitar 2
Light palm mute
Bass
Drums
(Var. 2)
1.
(Var. 3)
2.

BRIDGE

G7

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

G7

Bb

B

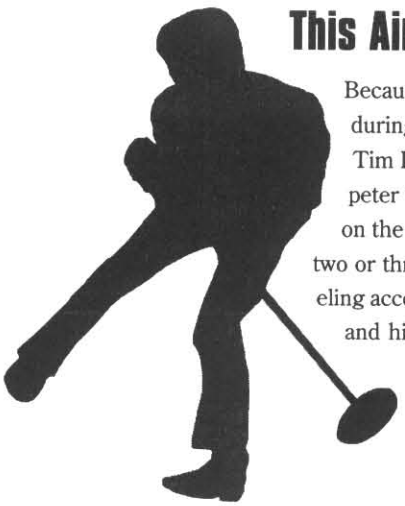
Back to Verse

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

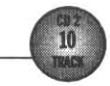
Drums



This Ain't No Apollo

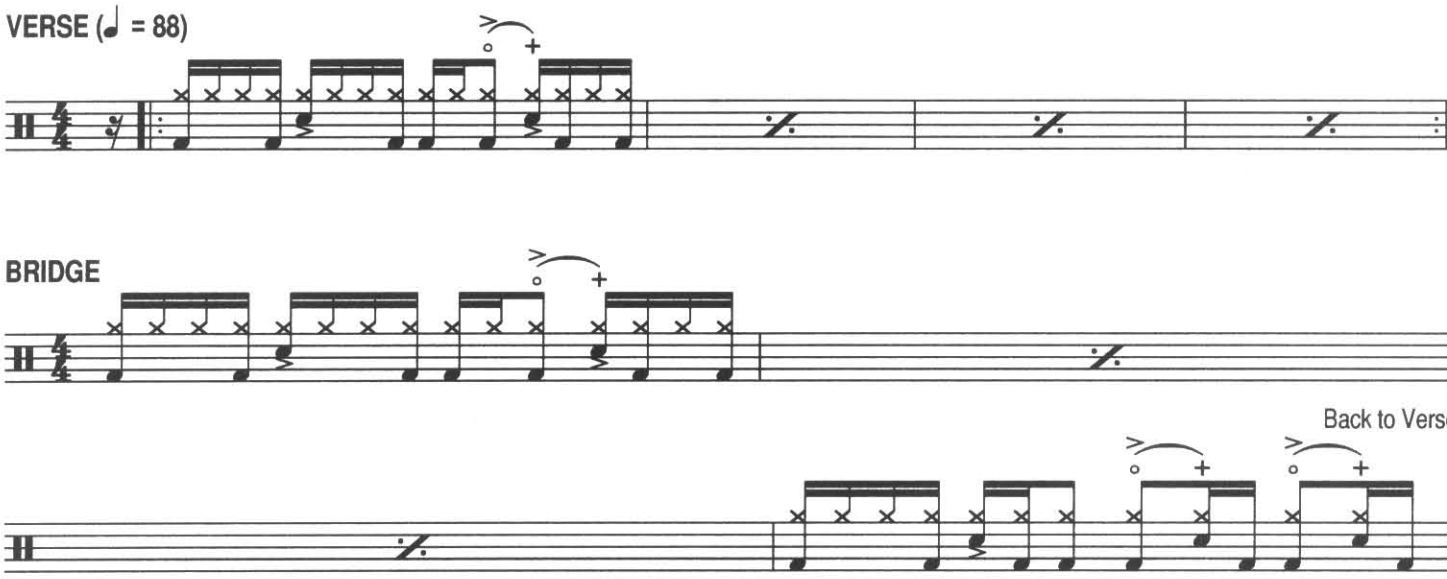
Because of the obvious security risks, James Brown could only take five bandmembers with him during his tour of Vietnam. The rhythm section consisted of Clyde Stubblefield, Jimmy Nolen, and Tim Drummond, and the cut-down horn section comprised saxophonist Maceo Parker and trumpeter Waymond Reed. Traveling around the countryside by helicopter or bus (with chicken wire on the windows to keep the Viet Cong from lobbing grenades inside), JB and his entourage played two or three shows a day in jungle heat that reached 115 degrees on stage. The life-threatening traveling accommodations and oppressive climate wouldn't be the only unique features of this tour. Brown and his sidemen were used to audiences dancing in the aisles or on top of their seats. Watching people dance on top of tanks and sandbag emplacements while mortars fired in the distance was an entirely new experience.

MELVIN PARKER •drums•



Melvin Parker's groove obviously went through major renovations after he left the James Brown band in 1965. The subtle, cross-stick driven, understated elegance of "Out of Sight," "Papa's Got A Brand New Bag," and "I Got You" has been replaced in "Got To Getcha" by a deep-pocketed, sixteenth-note backbeat pattern that leaves no doubt about where the beat lays.

There are also several additional hi-hat innovations that break with past tradition. Almost all James Brown hi-hat parts to date have had constant eighth-note patterns. With the exception of "Funky Drummer," sixteenth-note hi-hat patterns were rare, and if there was an open-and-closed pattern, it always occurred in the context of an "and-two" and "and-four" situation. Melvin breaks up his pattern on the third beat, mixing sixteenth and eighth-notes, and the opening and closing hi-hat occurs only on the "and" of "three" into the downbeat of beat "four." The "and-two" open-and-closed figure has been omitted. The two-beat fill in the fourth bar of the bridge deserves a "best originality" award for Melvin's integration of his full kit to create this unique turnaround. You deserve a "best coordinated" award if you can play it within the first five attempts. ◆



BERNARD ODUM •bass•

CD 2 11 TRACK

Depending upon how you look at it, Bernard Odum was in the right place at the right *or* wrong time in February of 1970. After a two-year leave of absence, he returned to the fold just in time to be canned along with the rest of James Brown's rebellious sidemen. The upside is, he finally got the chance to be his own bass player. The result is immediately apparent. "Got To Getcha" is by far the busiest and most ambitious Bernard Odum bass performance to date. If it weren't for the fact that Bernard probably hadn't heard the recently recorded "Sex Machine" at the time of The King's Men studio sessions, his "Got to Getcha" bass work could be interpreted as his answer to the challenge posed by "Bootsy" Collins' new, virtuoso style.

In keeping with these musicians' longstanding penchant for tonal ambiguity, Bernard completely avoids chordal thirds, building his lines entirely around roots, fifths, and flat sevenths. The only deviation from these three pitches occurs around a few chromatic passing tones and open "E" and "A" strings used in the bridge to facilitate large intervallic leaps and position shifts. The guitars control the tonal identity in this tune by supplying major thirds in their voicings.

This is one of the easier songs in this book in terms of locking. The groove, from a rhythmic standpoint, is essentially one big unison. All the rhythm section instruments play squarely on the downbeats of "one," "two," and "four," and both the guitars and the bass avoid the downbeat of "three" and restart their lines on the second sixteenth-note of that same beat. In the bridge—with the exception of the the second and fourth beats of the first measure—Bernard is nailing every downbeat as he solidifies the whole section. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 88)

C9

1.

2.

BRIDGE

G7

Back to Verse

B♭ B

JIMMY NOLEN AND ALFONZO "COUNTRY" KELLUM •guitars•

CD 2 12 TRACK

The two guitar parts in this tune provide an excellent study in controlled legato and staccato styles of phrasing and touch. The choppy, staccato feel of the guitars in the verses is a result of a combination of two techniques: Nolen and Kellum cut notes short by releasing finger pressure in the left hand directly after the notes are picked. They also lightly mute the strings by resting the heel of the right hand on the guitar's bridge. A nice variation in touch occurs in the bridge section of the tune as the second guitar part features ringing, Steve Cropper-style 6th intervals. In total contrast to the verse technique, these are produced by holding down the left hand fingers as long as possible so the strings can vibrate freely.

The clipped, almost gated sound of "Country" Kellum's (Guitar One) bridge rhythm is produced mainly in the left hand by varying degrees of finger pressure. Loosely finger the G7th chord voicings whose pitches are intended to be audible (G,B,F) so they don't ring too much. The percussive chords (the X's) should not be pressed down toward the fingerboard at all. Just keeping the fingers on the strings after releasing pressure on the G7th voicings is enough to deaden them. The right hand just strums the indicated rhythm pattern.

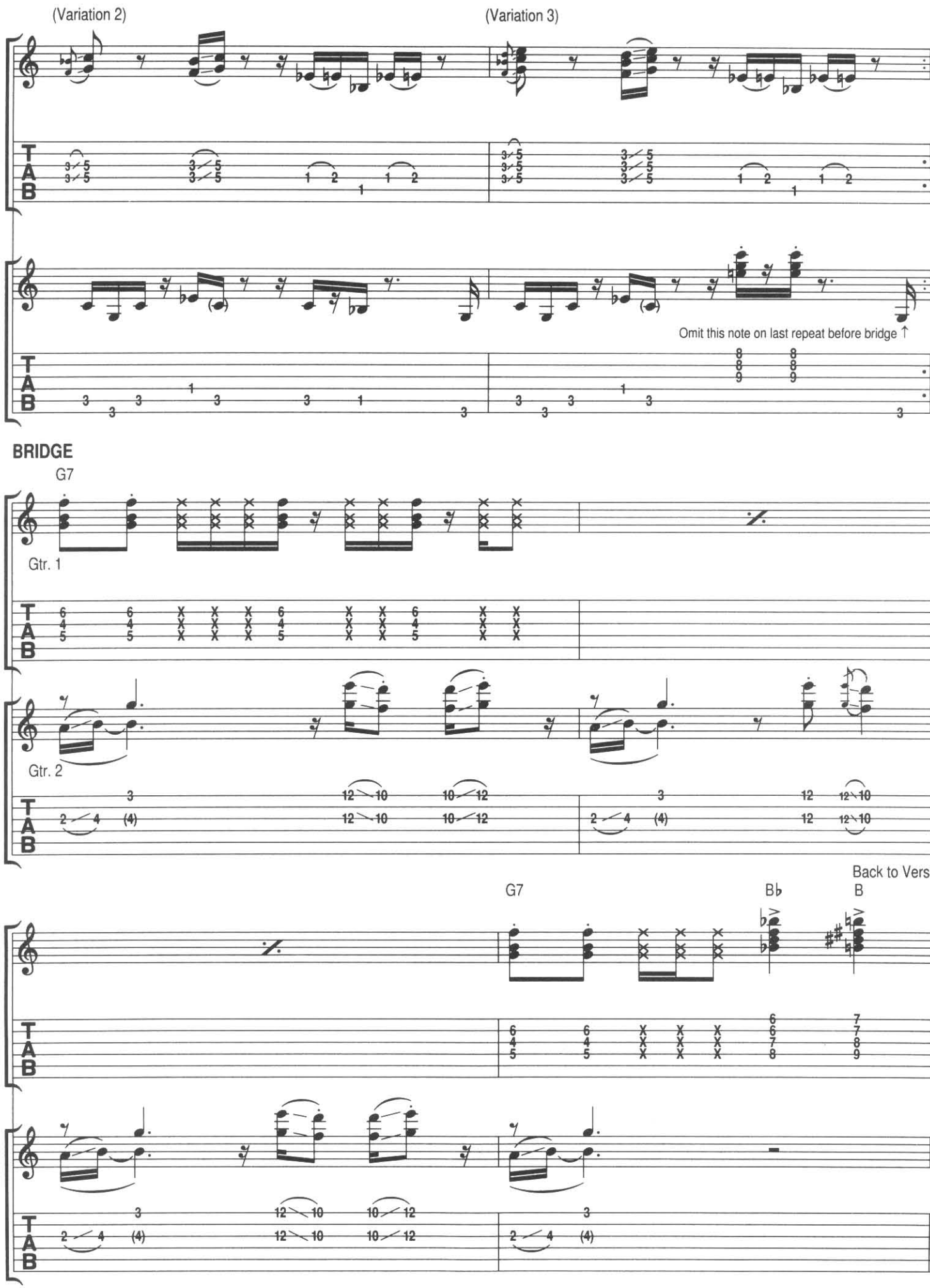
It would be a neat and quick transcribing job if these guys just locked on to a nice two-bar vamp and held on, but no such luck. Their new-found freedom has left them feeling far too improvisational to allow themselves to be hemmed in by stagnant, repetitive motifs. Guitar One in the verses starts with a basic pattern and gradually adds variations on the first and second beats, going from a single-note pattern—to intervals—to three-note voicings. Although they are notated as being one bar apiece, each variation is played for several bars before moving on to the next one. Variations occur in the second guitar part by ghosting, or sometimes completely omitting the "C's" on the second sixteenth of beat "two" in every bar. These are the notes in parenthesis. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 88)

C9 (Variation 1)

Gtr. 1 freely moves through the indicated variations

Gtr. 2 Light palm mute


(Variation 2)
(Variation 3)
Omit this note on last repeat before bridge ↑
BRIDGE
G7
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
Back to Verse
G7
B♭
B

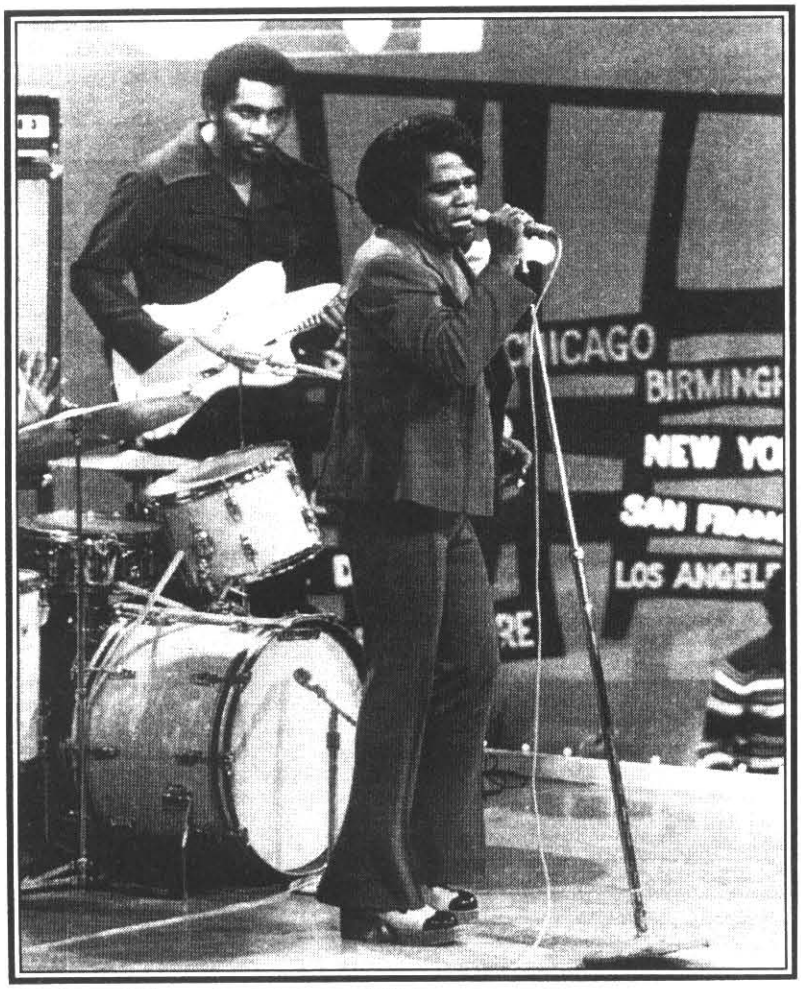
chapter 16

FUNKY WOMEN

recorded May, 1970

This book wouldn't be complete without one more selection from those fabulous mutineers of the celebrated 1970 James Brown band rebellion. In this track, Maceo & All The King's Men are playing funk reduced to its lowest common denominator. One vamp—one mode—one hour. Well, maybe that's exaggerating a bit. The original recording is actually just a bit over five minutes, but your hands and feet will feel like you've been playing for a much longer period of time. This track is about endurance, attitude, and energy. It's an athletic event dressed in musician's clothing. If your chops don't hurt and you're not sweating, you're probably not playing it right.

Unlike every other groove in this book, "Funky Women" is based on a completely linear rhythm section approach. There isn't a chord to be found. In fact, it's even more minimalist than that. Other than a few open E strings used as hammered-on pick up notes in the first guitar part, it's based entirely around just three notes—"D," "E♭," and "F." The harmonic nuances in this tune are supplied by the horn section, which is hinting at some of the same Dorian mode "So What" harmonies that inspired the band's "Cold Sweat" performance three years earlier. It looks like James Brown wasn't the only one who recycled ideas. ◆



© Bruce Talamon/Michael Ochs Archives/Venice, CA

With Jimmy Nolen on Soul Train, ca. 1973

FUNKY WOMEN •master score•

CD 2 13 TRACK

VERSE (♩ = 111)

F Dorian

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

(w/wah-wah) ↑ Mute these notes with left hand so that they have almost no pitch.

Bass

Drums

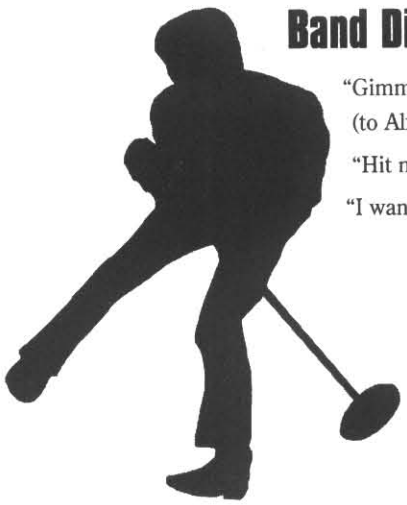
Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums



Band Directions—Godfather Style Pt. 3

"Gimme a little extra stroke there "Country" so I know you playin' guitar." (to Alfonzo Kellum in "Get It Together")

"Hit me now!" (from "Sex Machine")

"I wanna play some funky organ." (instructions to himself on "Stone To The Bone")

MELVIN PARKER •drums•

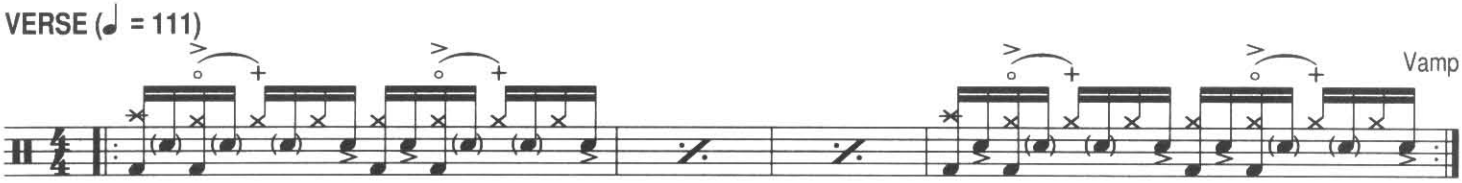
CD 2 13 TRACK

Even though Clyde Stubblefield was the master of the displaced snare drum, his grooves always had at least one solid backbeat within the pattern. In "Funky Women," Melvin Parker wasn't so charitable. The only component of his drum kit that you'll ever find on "two" and "four" is the hi-hat. James Brown has always said that he took the music off "two" and "four" and placed it on the "one." It's ironic that the ultimate example of this principle happened in a song when his band was no longer with him.

Melvin's ingenious four-bar drum pattern emerges out of a constant flow of sixteenth-notes distributed over two drum surfaces. The hi-hat is playing eighth-notes while the snare drum fits in between, playing a combination of off-beat accents and ghost notes on the second and fourth sixteenth-notes of each four-note grouping. The kick drum, playing on "one-and" and "three-and" completely turns the usual "two" and "four" based R&B groove inside out. As in some of the earlier drum patterns that are technically challenging from a standpoint of independence of all the components, you may want to leave out the opening and closing of the hi-hat until you're comfortable with how everything fits together.

The various charts that measure success in the music industry ignored The King's Men, but the music they played was not lost on musicians. Legendary Tower of Power drummer David Garibaldi credits Melvin's "Funky Women" beat as one of his primary influences. "I was instinctively drawn to "Funky Women," says David. "It stood out because there wasn't a "two" and "four" groove, and at the time, I was experimenting with that concept. It was at this time that we wrote 'The Oakland Stroke' and some of the other TOP songs featuring grooves without the standard backbeats. Melvin Parker had a very big influence on me." ◆

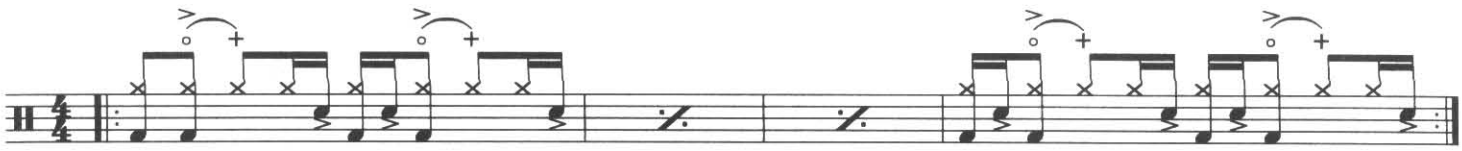
VERSE (♩ = 111)



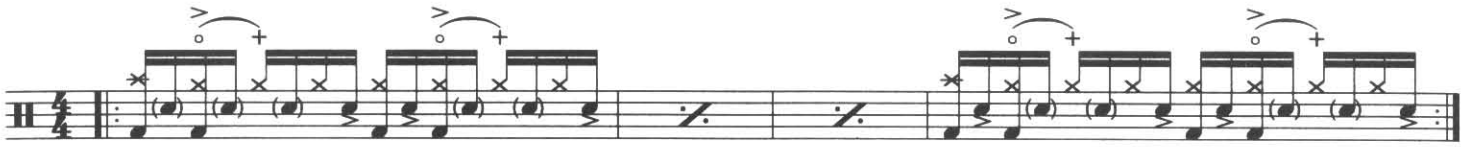
DRUM LESSON

CD 2 14 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



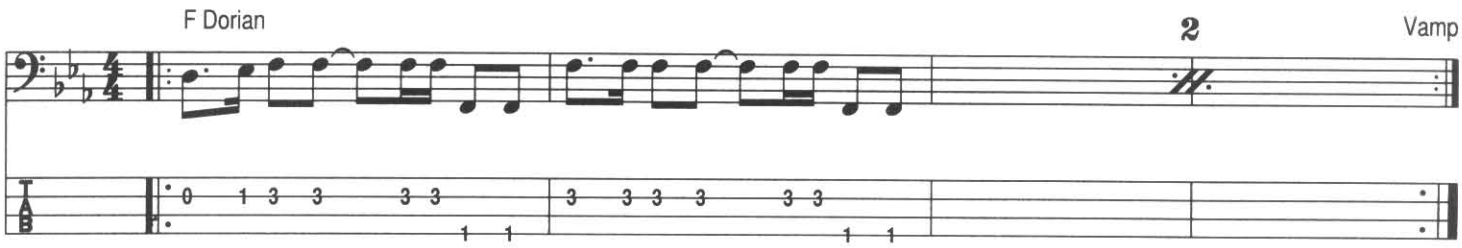
BERNARD ODUM •bass•

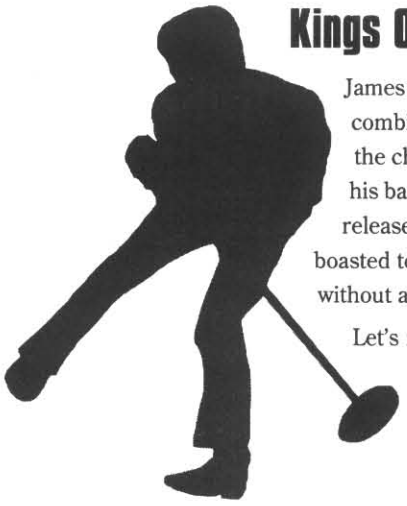
CD 2 15 TRACK

Somewhere around the five-minute, thirty-second mark into this recording, Bernard Odum's tortured hands were probably sending the following impassioned message to his brain: "Hey, brother, couldn't you just sample those two bars and loop it." Miraculously, if Bernard could have sampled his part in the non-digital era in which "Funky Women" was recorded, you wouldn't have been able to tell the difference anyway. His playing was that consistent.

Never one of the flashier, technical demons amongst James Brown alumni (with the the exception of "Got To Getcha" in the previous chapter), Bernard had long endeared himself to his band mates because of his unfailing ability to lay it down and keep it there until Hell froze over. The only deviation from the simple two-bar Dorian vamp he plays throughout this tune occurs in the very first measure when he plays two "F's" for the first two notes instead of the "D" and "E♭." From that point on, the bass line follows the transcription until the fade out. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 111)





Kings Of The Charts Without A #1 Hit

James Brown and his musicians were responsible for records that charted more times than the combined totals of the Beatles and Elvis Presley. The *Live at the Apollo* album alone stayed on the charts for 66 straight weeks. By 1967, when they were at their peak, the tracks that JB and his bands were cranking out virtually guaranteed King Records a million-seller on almost every release. Their concerts drew 3,000,000 fans that year, and Brown and his announcer Danny Ray boasted total career sales in excess of 50,000,000. Amazingly, all of these feats were accomplished without a #1 hit.

Let's rephrase that: without a #1 *Pop* hit. From 1956's "Please Please Please" through 1974's "The Payback" (recorded in '73), James Brown and his band took the #1 spot on the R&B charts 15 different times. But the highest spot they ever reached on the Pop charts was #3 with 1965's "I Got You (I Feel Good)."

The guitar players share a common mission with the bass in this tune in that they all have to lock up with Melvin Parker's no-backbeat drum pattern. You can either start to panic now, or you can use this groove as an exercise to throw away the crutch of anchoring your feel off of these two beats. The subtle hi-hat and ghosted snare drum parts you'll have to depend on in this tune won't be as "in-your-face" as a pounding backbeat, but they are there as guides, nevertheless.

Guitar One is a streamlined, less notey version of the second guitar part. Aside from the open "E" strings used to hammer into the low "F's," every note of Guitar One meets in unison with the second part. The dissonant clashes between the low "E's" of Guitar One and the low "F's" of Guitar Two are lessened by occurring on relatively weak rhythmic spots (the last sixteenth-note of beats "two" and "four"). The wah-wah pedal used in the second guitar part also masks this problem to a certain extent.

While Guitar One is a piece of cake to play, the second part has a few technical problems you'll have to deal with. Skipping over the open "A" string on beat "one" when jumping from the "E♭" on the "D" string to the low "F" on the "E" string involves a bit of left-handed finesse. You can either finger the low "F" with the thumb of your left hand, you can play both notes with the fingertip of your first finger and quickly jump over the open "A" string, or, you can use a first finger barre across the three lower strings. In order to maintain the almost-muted, staccato feel of the notes, you'll have to rock the barre backwards from the "D" string to the low "E" string to avoid having the notes ring out. Beat "two" features the same fingering problem, but it's further complicated by the light, almost muted touch you have to apply to the three "E♭'s."

In the never-ending debate over analytical musical approaches versus the methodology of just playing what you feel, this song makes a case for the latter philosophy. The melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements can easily be explained by dropping the names of a scale, a mode, or a few rhythmic catch-words like "syncopation" or "backbeat." But as you can see from the previous paragraph, elements of touch, time, emotion and all the rest of the infinite shadings and nuances that comprise "feel" are far more elusive elements to describe and play. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 111)

F Dorian

Vamp

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2 (w/wah-wah) ↑ Mute these notes with left hand so that they have almost no pitch.

chapter 17

SUPER BAD, PTS. 1 & 2

recorded june, 1970

Shaken by his last band's uprising, James Brown realized that he had to loosen up on his strict disciplinary code. The young guns he had just hired didn't have families to support and, consequently, were in it more for the music and fun than for their meager $250 weekly salaries. If he pushed them too hard, he knew they'd walk. "James would fine us but we never paid it," "Catfish" Collins says with a laugh. "He knew we didn't play that way. He would do it but it never came out of our paychecks. We got treated different than the other guys who were there before us. He'd fine them for real and take the money out."

This tenuous relationship played itself out as a psychological mini-drama during the "Super Bad" session, the new backup band's second recording date as the J.B.'s. The Collins brothers were still trying to come to grips with being in the employ of their idol. "After all the years we had been listening to him on the radio, buying his records, and playing his music in clubs around Cincinnati, we just couldn't believe we were actually working with this guy," explains "Bootsy." Their driven boss, on the other hand, was still struggling with the old demons of a managerial style that had resulted in a major insurrection.

As heard on the original multi-track tape, Brown initially took the role of the supportive father figure, cheering on his brood and complimenting them on the groove they had just created. But his benevolent opening move was short-lived. Losing his composure amidst too many questions, Brown chastised them: "Don't bug me. OK? Just play what you play. Don't be a drag." Not wanting to travel down the route he had recently taken with his old cast, Brown caught himself and allowed them the space to find their way. His patience paid off when "Bootsy" & Co. napalmed the studio walls with their incendiary "Super Bad" performance. "Play as hard as you want," the boss lauded them. "I don't care, 'cause you know where you're going now. Just go for yourself. You're doing fine." ◆

© Harry Weinger

Reunited at James Brown's birthday party, Augusta, GA, 1992. L to R: Bobby Byrd, James Brown, and Bootsy Collins.

SUPER BAD, PTS. 1 & 2 •master score•

VERSE (♩ = 120)

D7 (no 3rd)

Guitar

Bass

Drums

Guitar

Bass

Drums

D9 (no 3rd)

Guitar

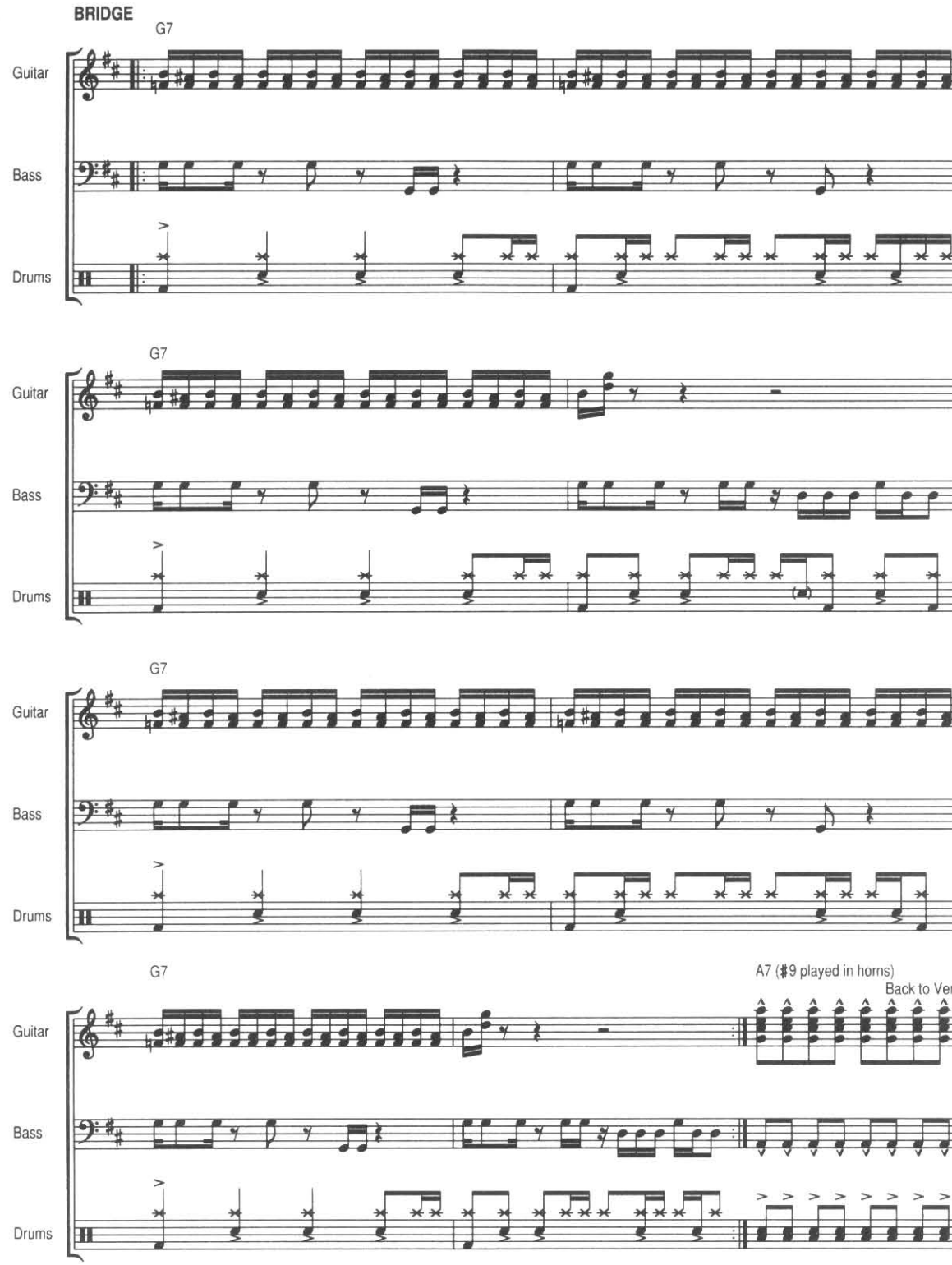
Bass

Drums

Guitar

Bass

Drums


BRIDGE
G7
Guitar
Bass
Drums
G7
Guitar
Bass
Drums
G7
Guitar
Bass
Drums
G7
A7 (#9 played in horns)
Back to Verse
Guitar
Bass
Drums

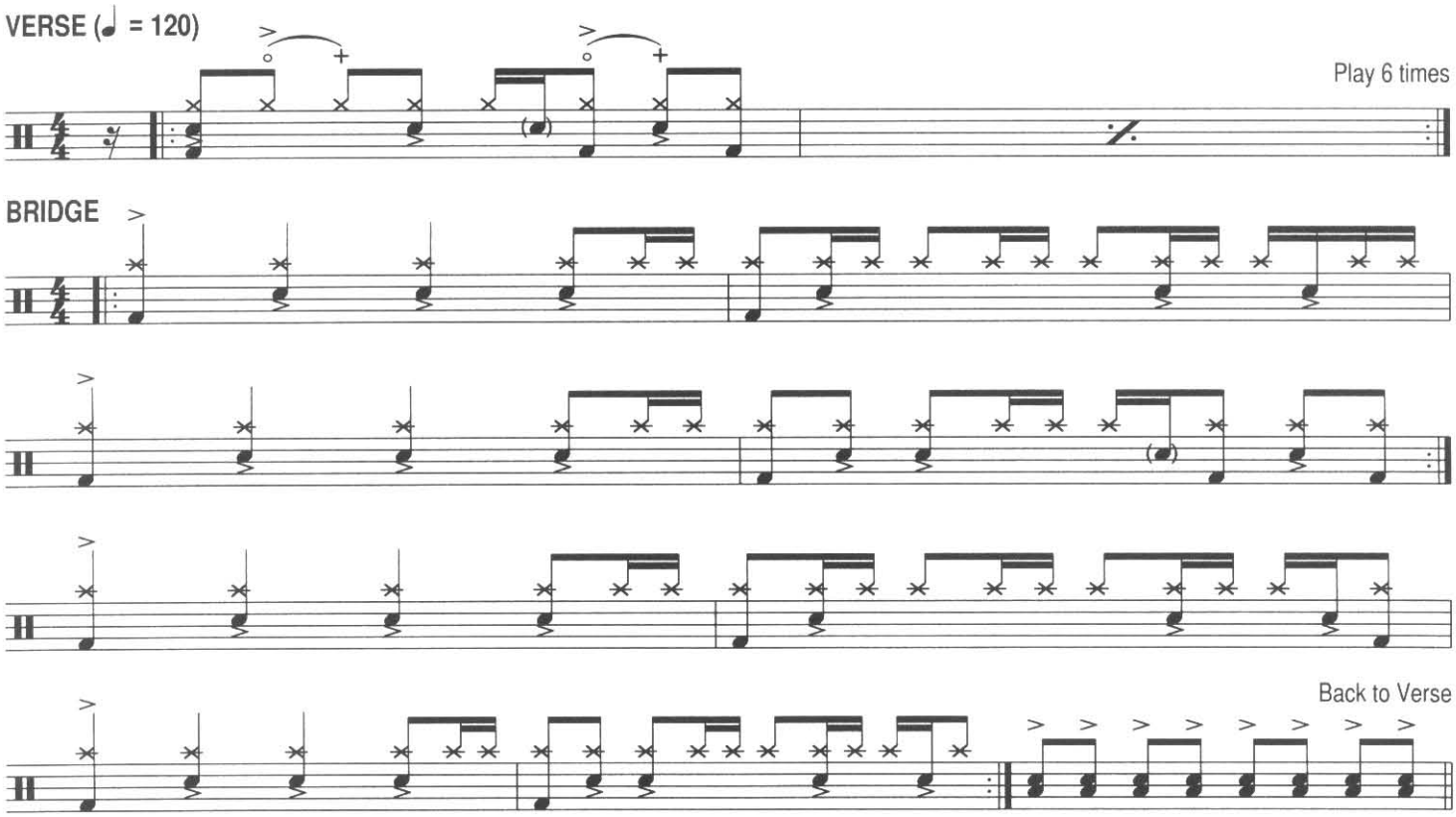
JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

CD 2 17 TRACK

When the original band's uprising occurred in March, "Jab'o" Starks was just as unhappy about the pay scale and working conditions as the rest of the band, but there was one major difference: "Jab'o" had signed a contract. Refusing to break his word to James Brown, Starks stayed on after everyone else departed. His loyalty resulted in his ascendancy to sole possession of the "first chair" drummer position for all the J.B.'s-era recording sessions. "Jab'o" emerged as the elder statesman of the the rhythm section as well as the bridge between the old and the new.

This transformation occurs in "Super Bad," during the millisecond that exists between the last note of the first verse and the first downbeat of the bridge. "Jab'o's" verse pattern—the completion of a three-song experiment that started in "Licking-Stick" and "Sex Machine"—looks to the past while hinting at the boundless drum frontier to come. The hi-hat and kick drum figures are the reactionary elements. We've heard them before—note-for-note—in the previous two songs. It's the snare drum and its unique placement (on the downbeat of "one" and the upbeat of "two") in this two-bar pattern that acts as the harbinger of the future.

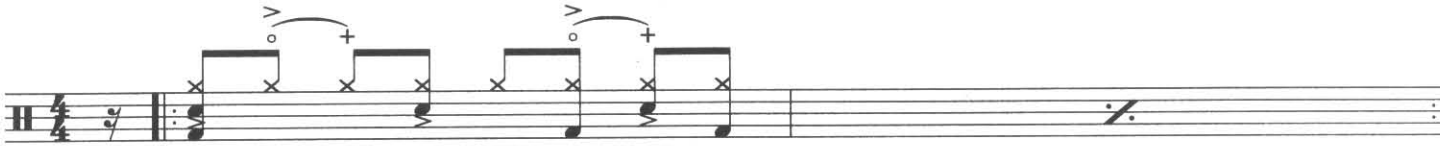
At the record's 1:34 mark, the new order instantly makes its presence felt when the first bridge is introduced amidst a torrential downpour of accented snares, a wildly improvisational ride cymbal, and a minimalist kick drum. As rash and impulsive as the description of this groove sounds, you have to remember that there is a master drummer at the helm. Starks adds structure to this section by saving all his improvisations for the even-numbered bars. Bars one, three, five, and seven are identical, and feature three accented snare drum attacks that emphasize the quarter-notes in the horn line. Having paid his dues to the team, the even-numbered bars then become "Jab'o's World," a no-rules, free-form realm where snare drum, cymbal, and kick drum attacks can occur on any beat and in any combination. ◆



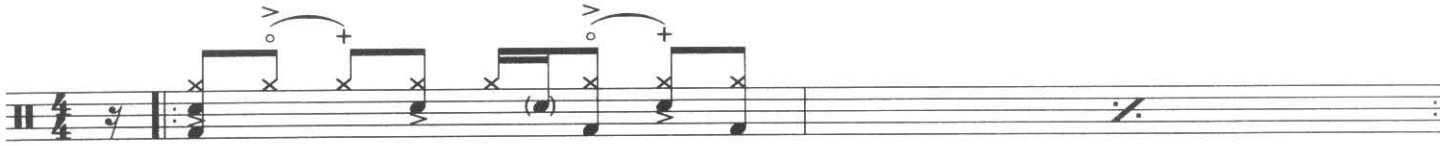
DRUM LESSON

CD 2 18 TRACK

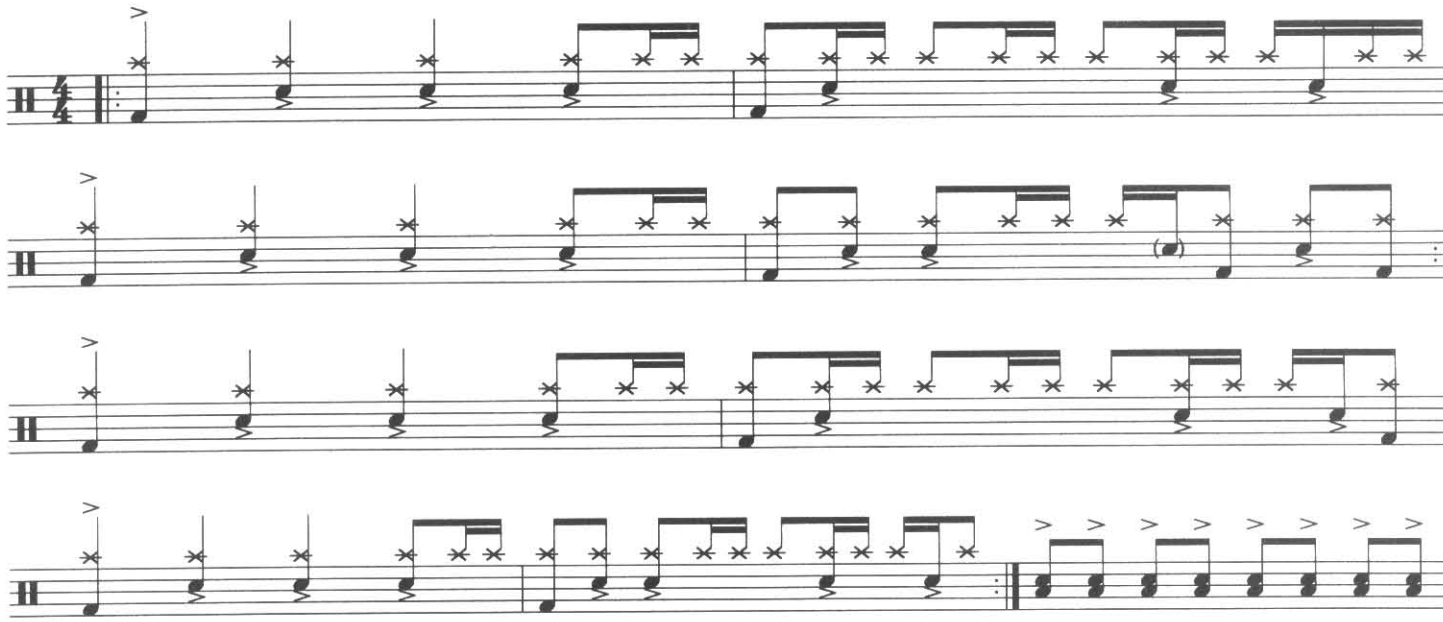
BASIC VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE



WILLIAM "BOOTSY" COLLINS •bass•

There are an infinite number of ways for bassists to interact with drummers inside a groove. Breaking the methodology down to its simplest components, a bassist can either play with the drums in a supportive mode or he/she can play off the drums by playing the rhythmic "holes" in between the kick and snare drums. School is in session on "Super Bad," as Professor "Bootzilla" delivers a master class on the subject. All cylinders are firing at the same time during the verse section as "Bootsy's" bass line stays right with "Jab'o" Starks's kick and snare drums. This occurs in every measure on the downbeat of "one," the upbeat of "three," and the down and upbeats of beat "four."

In all the odd-numbered bars of the bridge section, "Bootsy" reverses direction by 180 degrees, totally avoiding "Jab'o's" three accented quarter-notes on the snare drum. While "Jab'o" is playing downbeats, "Bootsy" chooses to play upbeats or silence. The even-numbered bars of the bridge are a combination of the two concepts: sometimes the two instruments work in unison while at other times they spar with each other in an animated contrapuntal discussion. The shifting textures that are the end result of this bass-drum interplay help to define the different sections of the song. "Bootsy's" innate rhythmic sense has transformed a mundane root-fifth bass line into an assertiveness training manual for bass players. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 120)

D7 (no 3rd)

Play 3 times

BRIDGE

G7

G7

Play 4 times

A7♯9

Back to Verse

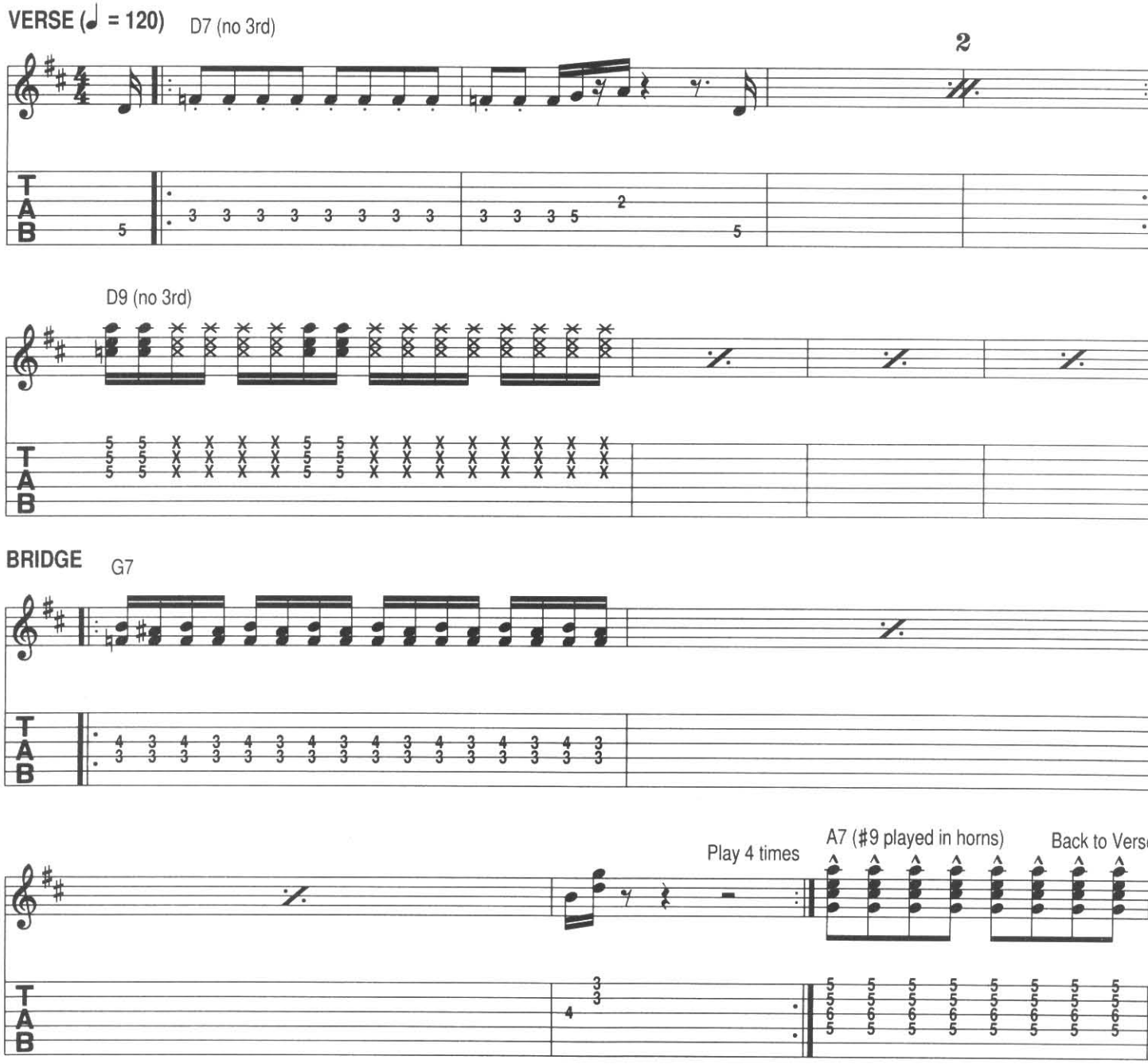
PHELPS "CATFISH" COLLINS •guitar•

CD 2 20 TRACK

In rock and roll, the terms "rhythm guitarist" and "lead guitarist" have fallen out of fashion. Referring to someone as a "rhythm guitarist" conjures up antiquated '60s visions of someone strumming big barre chords in the background while the spotlight focuses in on the "lead" guy who's playing the obligatory twenty-minute, single-note solo.

In contrast, the term "rhythm guitar" is still alive and relevant in R&B, although the concept is, and has always been, somewhat different. The primary function of the '60s rock and roller's big barre chords was to fill up the background and make everything sound full. Rhythm was a coincidental, if not secondary, consideration. In R&B, and especially in the music of James Brown, it's the *only* consideration. Strums, scratches, single-note lines, and fills are all judged by their ability to add to the groove and overall rhythmic feeling.

Typical of many R&B guitarists, "Catfish" Collins blurs the distinction between the two philosophies. "I used to play a rhythm type lead guitar," he explains. "I'd go back and forth between single-note lines and strumming chords throughout the whole tune. It's all just guitar playing to me." In "Super Bad," "Catfish" proves his point as he seamlessly weaves from the single-note theme and scratch parts of the verse to the alternating double stops of the bridge. The single-minded rhythmic goal of each of these components makes them almost interchangeable. ◆



chapter 18

TALKIN' LOUD & SAYIN' NOTHING

recorded october, 1970

This aggressive, angry track took its bad-ass attitude from the equally testy mood of its author. For James Brown, getting this record to the marketplace was something akin to giving birth by Caesarean section. "Talkin' Loud" was originally recorded in February of 1970 as a fuzz box-driven pop tune. Played by a Cincinnati bar band, this track was an experiment intended to appeal to rock and roll stations. Instead, it wound up appealing to the storage shelves at King Records, its scheduled release canceled.

Seven months later, with "Bootsy's" gang behind him, the Godfather cut a new R&B version of the song in Macon, Georgia. His disposition became increasingly foul when scheduling problems at Capricorn Studios forced him to cut this new track in a crosstown recording facility that was not to his liking. Making matters worse, the scheduled release of "Talkin' Loud" version two met the same fate as version one; it was canceled.

In February of 1972, seventeen months down the road, the J.B.'s edition of "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothing" finally came out on James Brown's new label, Polydor. Organist and longtime James Brown sidekick Bobby Byrd points out that the song came at a time when the boss was "mad at everything from his business relationships to his old lady. He was mad when he wrote the words and mad when we cut it."

The lone emotion that was the dominant motivator in this track was mirrored by a solitary E♭7 chord that ran through the entire length of the recording. This unchanging harmony makes "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothing" all the more unique; James Brown tunes that have a distinctively different verse and bridge, such as this one, almost always change to a different chord or tonal center when moving from one section to the other.

While these two sections may share the same harmony, their feels and musical approaches are miles apart. The verses are played verbatim throughout the tune by all instruments. (Of course, with the exception of "Bootsy." Tying him down to one part would be like trying to hold back an earthquake at the San Andreas fault with Scotch tape.) In contrast, the bridges are rhythmic free-for-alls, with the main combatants avoiding repetition at all costs. The complete master take of this song runs 14:42, and its groove never wavers. Maybe the people and the politicians Brown wrote about in this song were saying nothin', but his band was talkin' loud and sayin' a lot. ◆

Courtesy of Jim Payne

The J.B.'s. From the left, in the back row: M.C. Danny Ray, violinist Richard Jones, arranger Dave Matthews, "Bootsy" Collins, John "Jab'o" Starks, "Tiger" Martin, Darryl "Hasaan" Jamison, Phelps "Catfish" Collins. From the left in the front row: Bobby Roach, Fred Wesley, Clayton "Chicken" Gunnells, St. Clair Pinckney and percussionist Johnny Griggs.

TALKIN' LOUD & SAYIN' NOTHING •master score•

VERSE (♩ = 100)

E♭9 D9 E♭9 E♭9 D9 E♭9

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

(see Bass lesson for Verse variations)

Bass

Drums

E♭9 D9 E♭9 E♭9 D9 E♭9

Play 4 times

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

BRIDGE

E♭7

Guitar 1

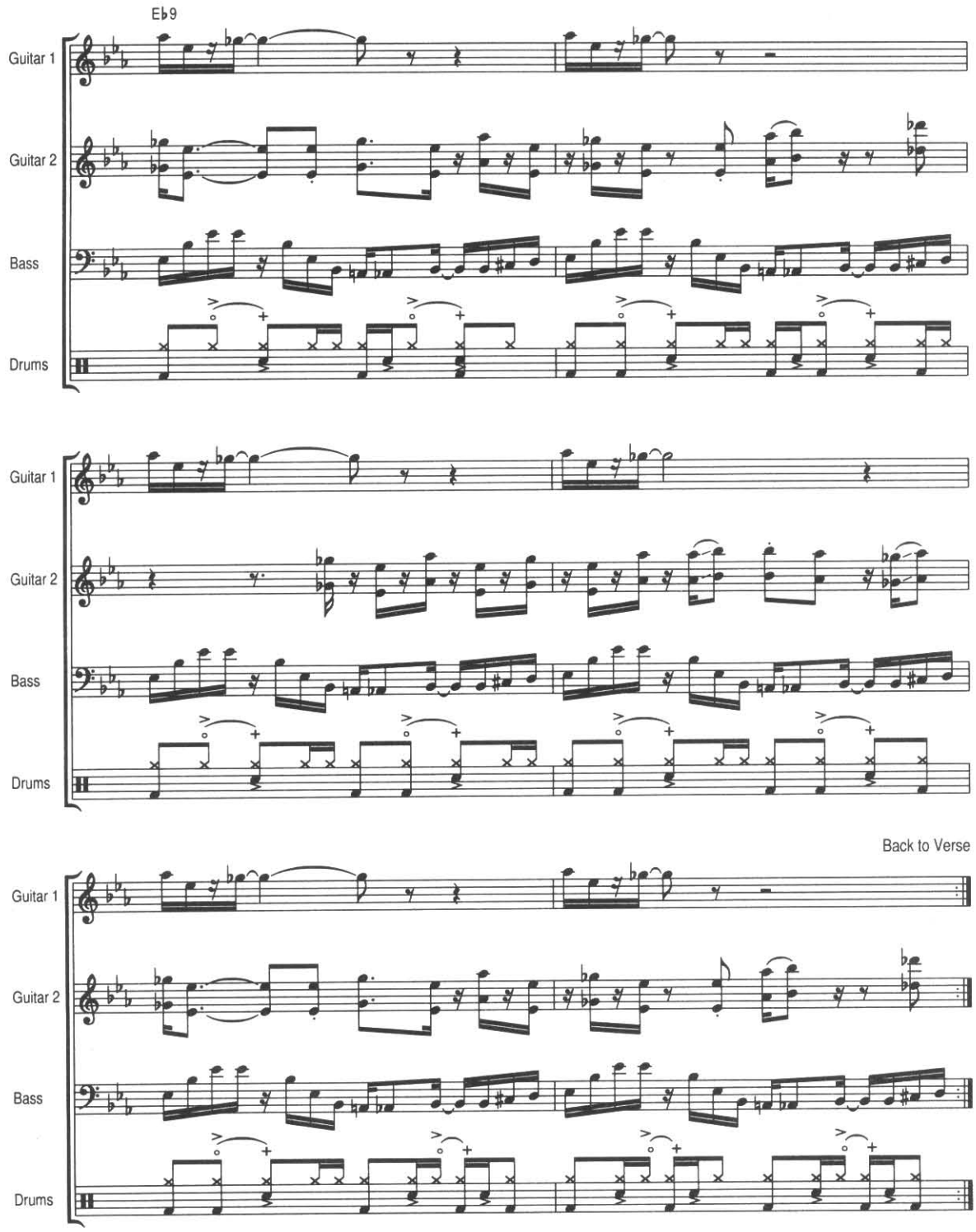
Guitar 2

(Gtr. 2 continues similar octave soloing through the Bridge)

Bass

Drums

* Note: Bars 1 and 2 of the Bridge bass part are played the first time only. On successive repeats, use the same 1-bar figure played in bars 3 through 8.


E♭9
Guitar 1
Guitar 2
Bass
Drums
Back to Verse

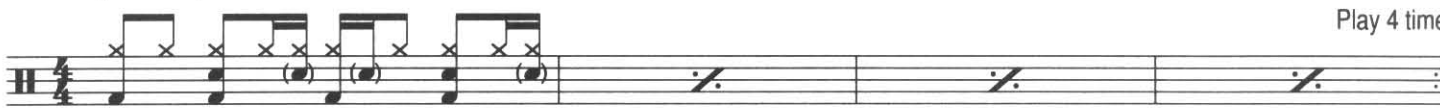
JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

CD 2 22 TRACK

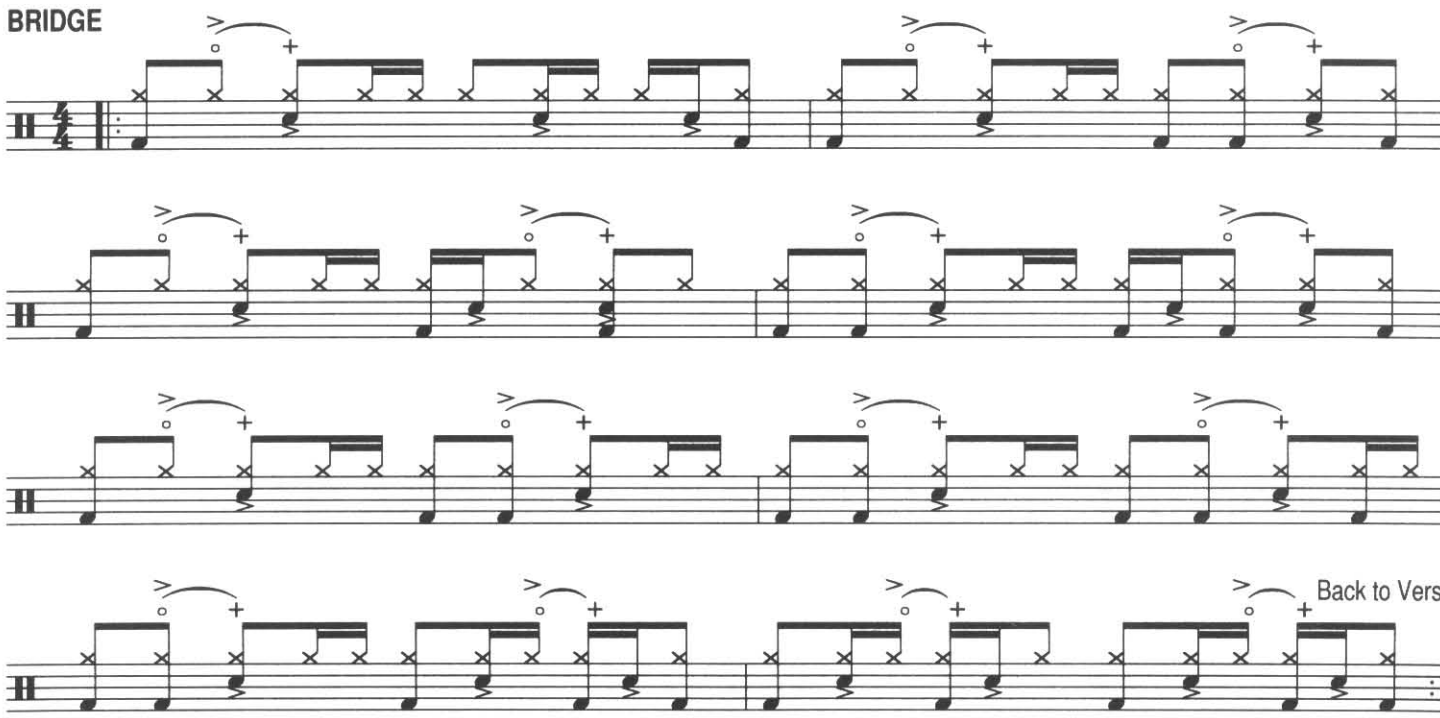
When you see the four quarter-note kick drums in the verse of this transcription, don't get upset. "Jab'o" isn't going Disco. He's just trying to lock in with "Bootsy" Collins' quarter-note bass figure. The seven-month-old collaboration of these two radically different musical personalities was beginning to pay musical dividends to both parties. The maturity and restraint of "Jab'o's" verse groove helped "Bootsy" find structure and balance in his playing. Conversely, as you can tell by the fact that "Jab'o" doesn't play any two bars alike in the bridge, "Bootsy's" wild ways were also beginning to rub off on him. The constantly mutating combinations of eighth and sixteenth-note hi-hat groupings, displaced and standard backbeat snares, and punctuating kick drum patterns is much more improvisational and daring than anything we've seen from "Jab'o" up to this point.

This performance was united by an overriding philosophy and approach rather than a specific and repetitive setup of notes. Grooves like this come from a much more instinctive and comfortable place than the intimidating preponderance of black ink you see in the transcriptions. As "Jab'o" explains, "James Brown's music was all about vamps. You just grooved with a good vamp, and there were so many things you could do within it. Once you started to play, the feel just took over." ◆

VERSE (♩ = 100)



BRIDGE



CD 2 23 TRACK

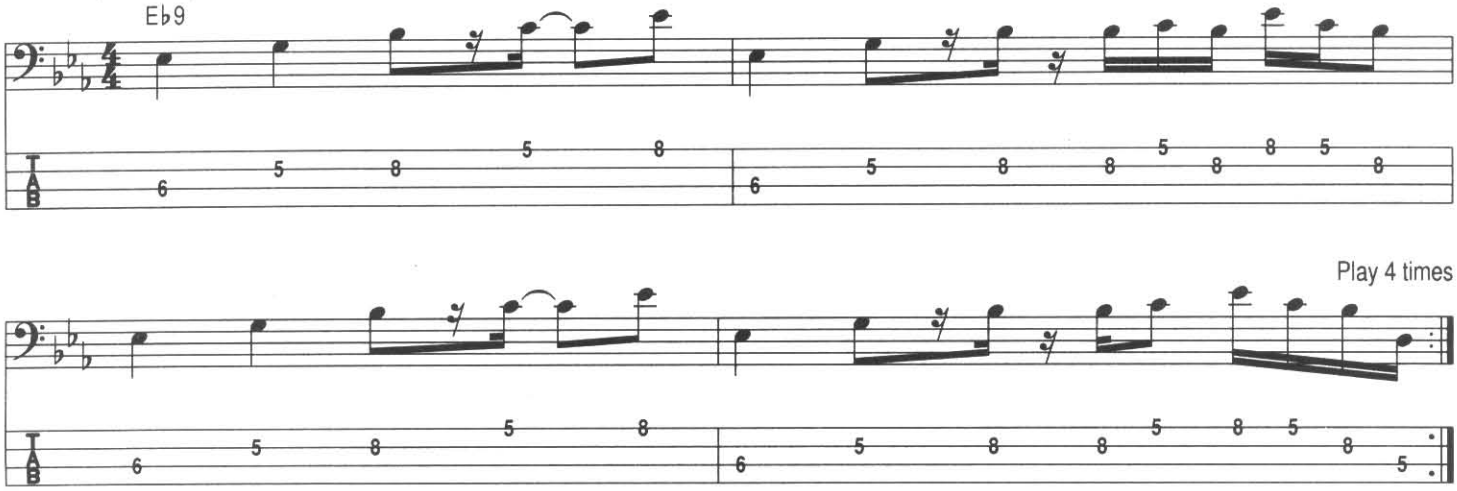
There is method behind the madness. There is much more control and planning going on here than meets the ear. In this case, the paper actually helps. As you can see (and hear), every odd-numbered measure in the verse is exactly the same. The even bars are used as platforms for improvisation but are approached in a very well thought out, and logical manner.

Throughout the entire verse section, "Bootsy" has limited himself to the chordal tones of an E♭6 chord. The only exceptions are chromatic passing tones used in the even-numbered bars during the variations. The result is a very bright-sounding melodic bass line that gives a nice contrast to the darker sound of the guitars, which are emphasizing the flat sevenths of the E♭7 dominant chord harmony. Bootsy doesn't touch this tone ("D♭") until the third variation, which is the line he uses to lead into the bridge.

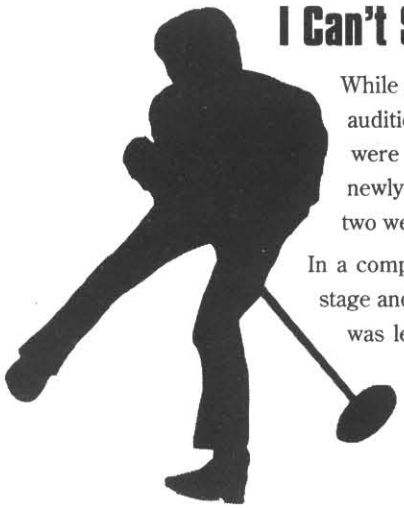
Because there is no shift to a different harmony in the bridge, the only way to differentiate between the two sections is by changing up the groove. "Bootsy" pumps up the activity level and complexity of his lines with a flurry of sixteenth-notes, but he takes the note selection in a simpler direction. Dropping the sixth chord degree (the "C") that was one of the principal components of his verse lines, "Bootsy" trims the bridge down to an E♭ arpeggio with a few chromatic runs leading into the chordal root. Because the guitars are only playing lines, the chordal role that he now assumes becomes an essential part of the bridge's harmonic presentation and stability.

(Note: There is a very subtle swing to the sixteenth-notes throughout this tune. Don't start subdividing and torturing yourself going for a quasi-triplet feel. Just make sure your lines are relaxed and a little lazy and this feel will happen naturally.) ◆

VERSE (♩ = 100)



I Can't Stand Myself (When You Audition Me)

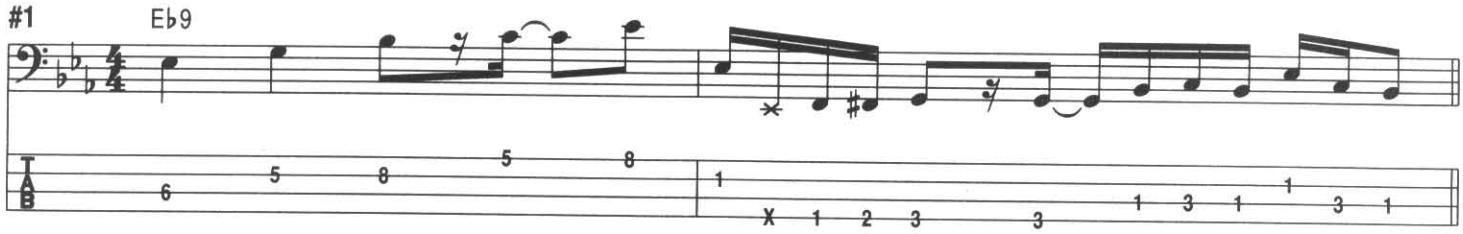


While many facets of James Brown's operation were extremely consistent, the recruitment and audition procedure for musicians wasn't one of them. Both "Jab'o" Starks and Melvin Parker were pursued by JB for several years before they agreed to join the band. Like many other newly arrived James Brown sidemen, they were told to sit in the wings and study the show for two weeks before being allowed to take the stage.

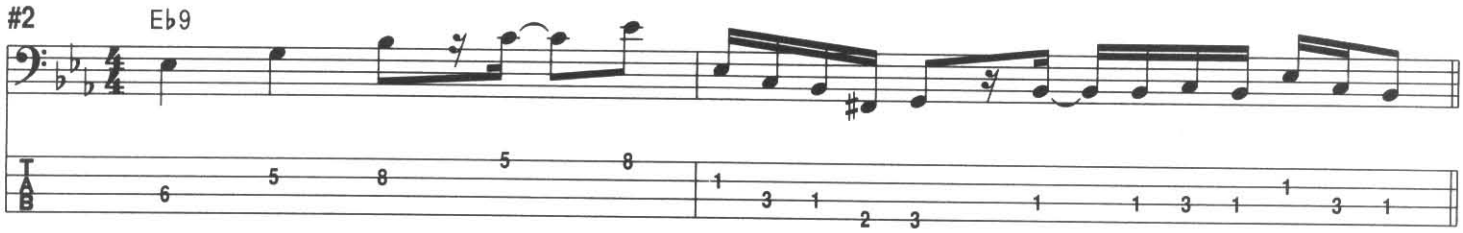
In a complete one hundred and eighty degree turnabout, Clyde Stubblefield was auditioned on stage and in front of a packed house, fifteen minutes before one of James Brown's concerts. This was less than twenty-four hours after James had discovered him playing in a Georgia club. Jimmy Nolen, "Bootsy" Collins, and "Catfish" Collins were also thrown into the water and told to swim the first day they were hired.

VERSE VARIATIONS

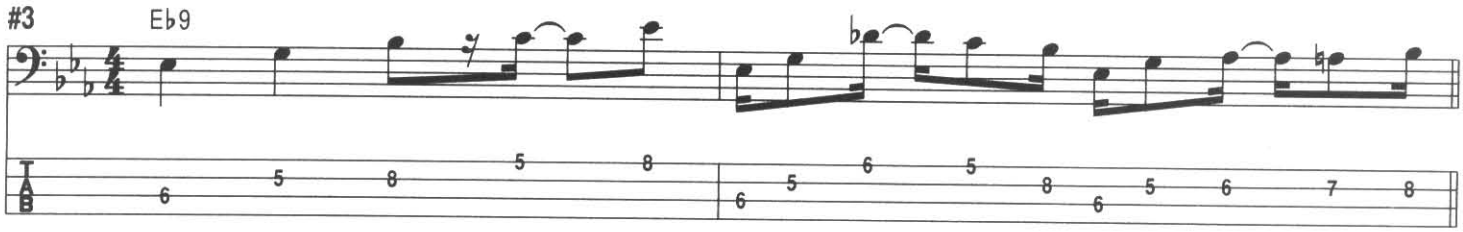
#1



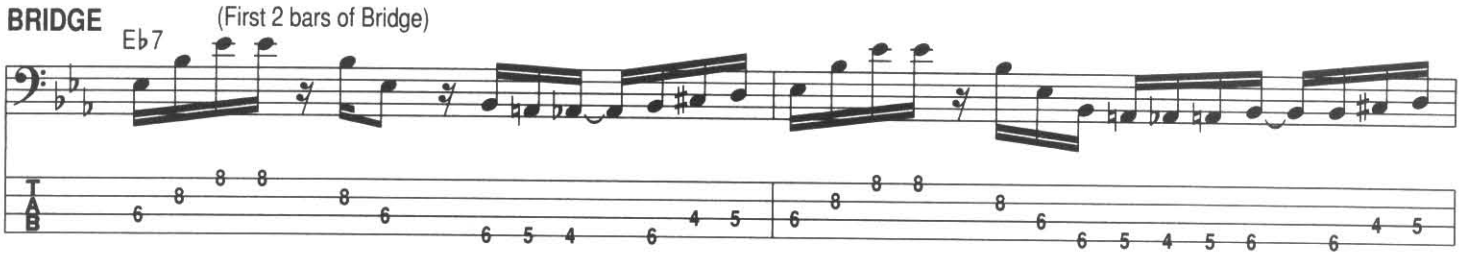
#2

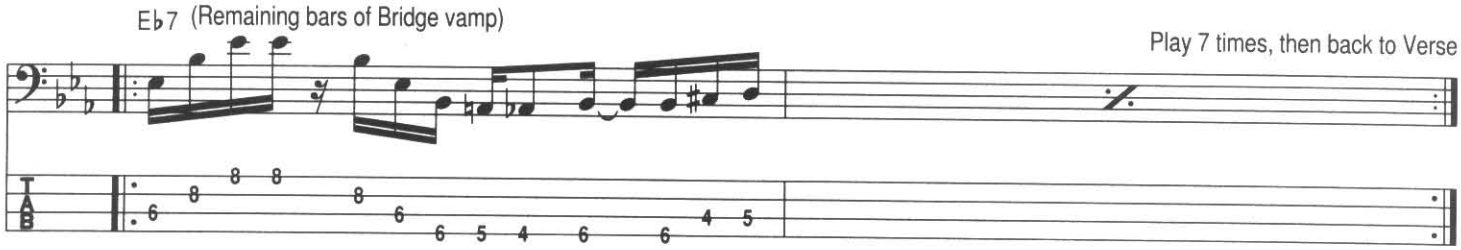


#3



BRIDGE



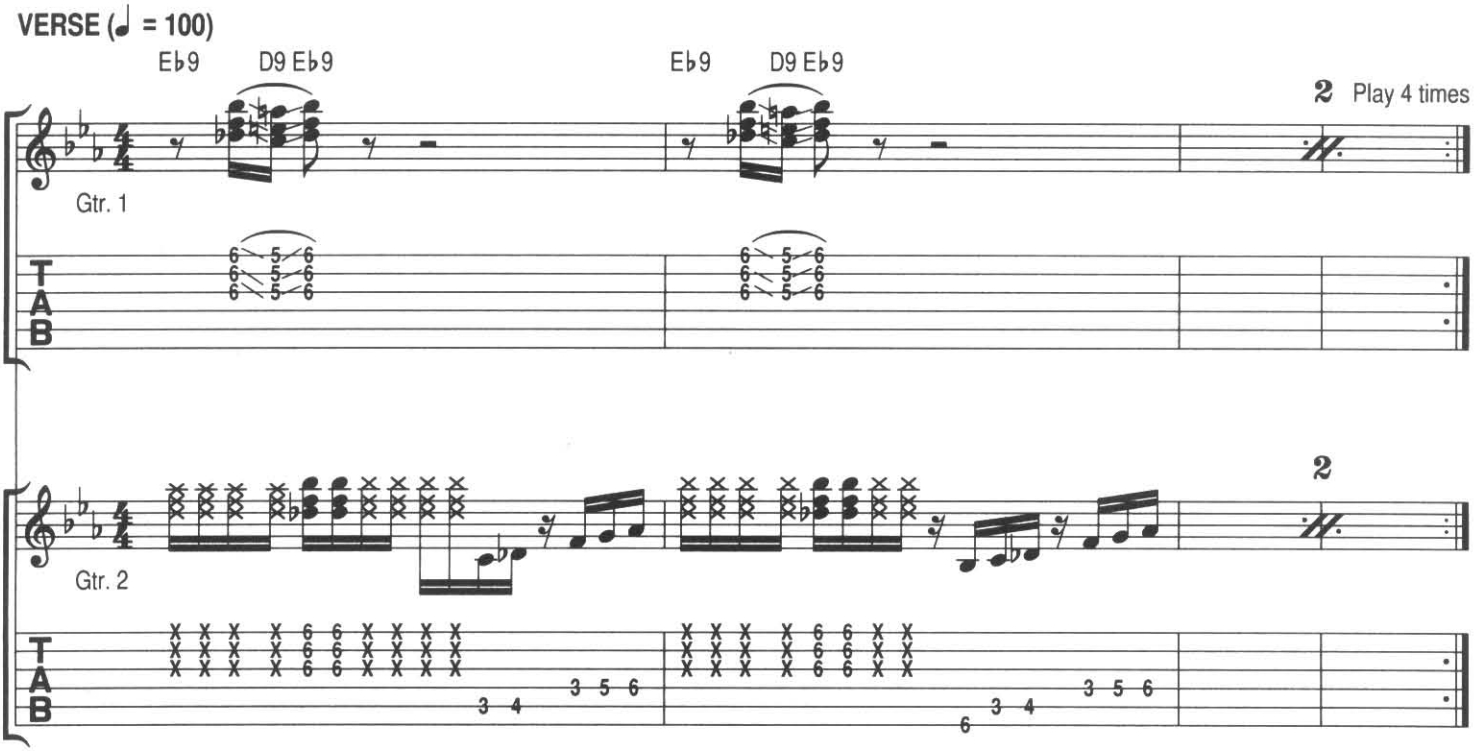


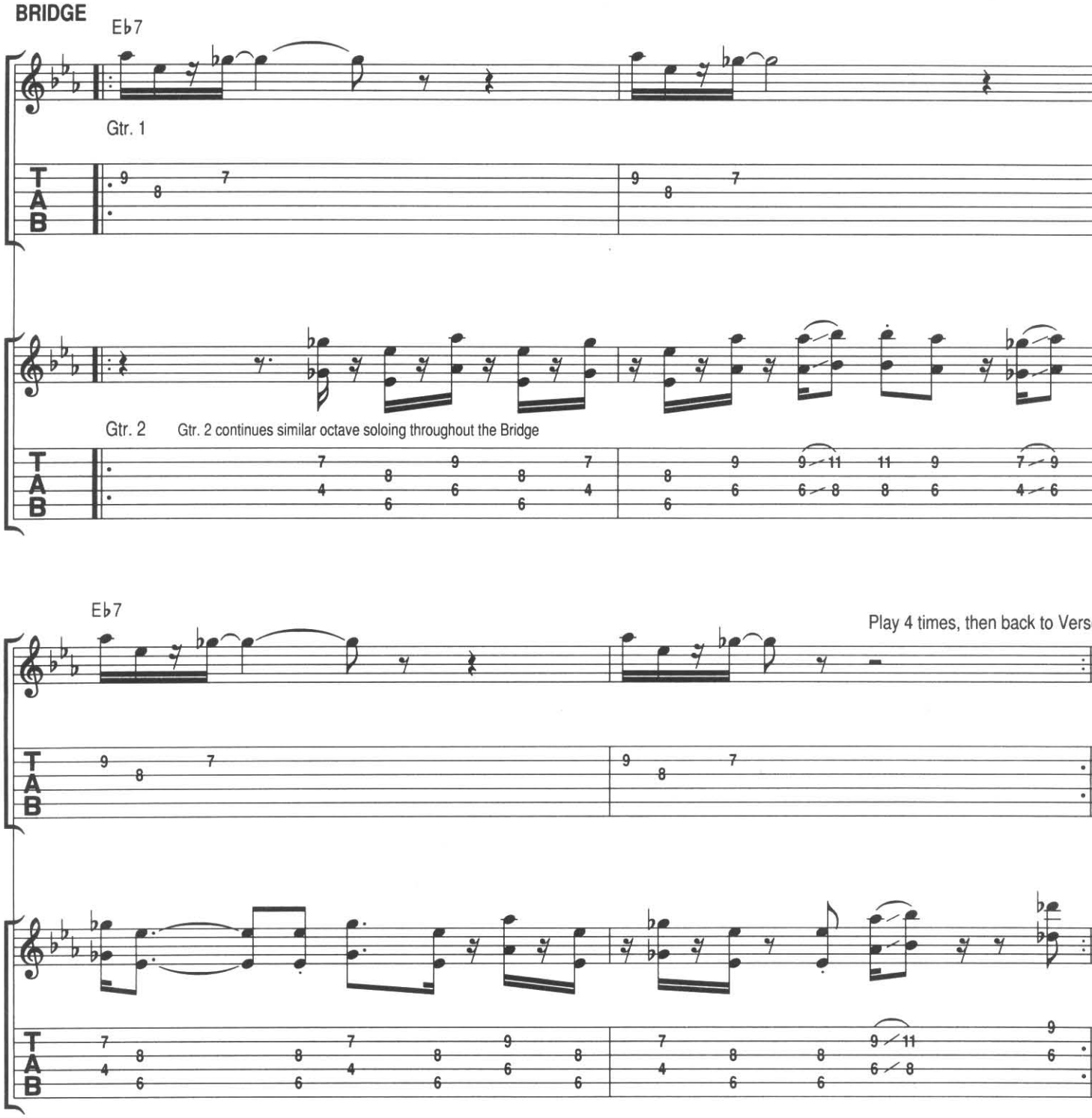
PHELPS "CATFISH" COLLINS AND HEARLON "CHEESE" MARTIN •guitars•

CD 2 24 TRACK

Still plagued by insecurity resulting from the recent band insurrection, James Brown set out to rebuild his entourage into the powerhouse it once was. The return of saxophonist St. Clair Pinckney and, shortly thereafter, trombonist Fred Wesley were the first significant steps in returning to the sound produced by his larger mid-sixties horn sections. With the recruitment of a new guitarist from New York named Hearlon "Cheese" Martin, Brown was also able to revert to the multi-layered guitar approach that he lost with the defections of Jimmy Nolen and "Country" Kellum.

"Catfish" and "Cheese" don't lose a step as they pick up where their predecessors left off, creating a contrapuntal jewel of a groove during the verses. As soon as "Cheese" finishes sliding back and forth on his E♭9 voicing (the first guitar part) during the first half of each measure, "Catfish" steps right into the rhythmic hole that is left in the second half and answers him with a two-beat, broken scale passage. Seizing the spotlight in the bridge, "Catfish" uses the repetitive, three-note blues lick "Cheese" is playing as a backdrop for a Wes Montgomery-style octave solo. (If you can lock while playing this line, the rest of the book will be a breeze. This is the most syncopated guitar figure in all of the transcriptions.) ◆



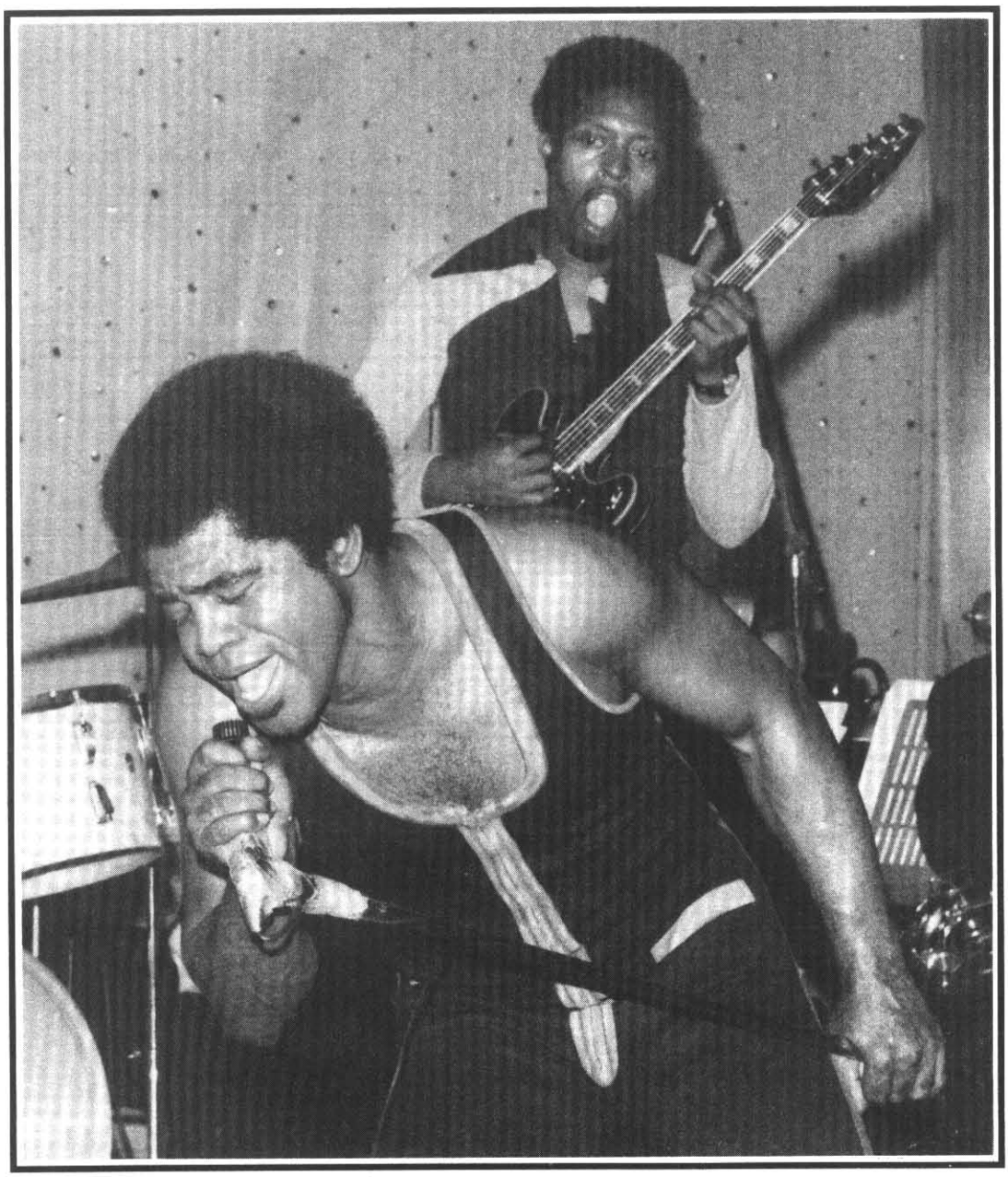

BRIDGE
E♭7
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 2 continues similar octave soloing throughout the Bridge
E♭7
Play 4 times, then back to Verse

chapter 19

GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (SIMULATED LIVE VERSION)

recorded july, 1970

The 1968 studio version of "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose" was a one-time-only affair. Shortly after it was cut, that arrangement was shelved in favor of this souped-up barn burner. A mainstay of James Brown's stage shows, this new version of the song was featured on the *Sex Machine* album released in 1970. Six of the album's tunes were recorded live at the Bell Auditorium in James Brown's hometown of Augusta, Georgia and featured his late '60s band. This particular track was actually a studio cut with overdubbed applause. It was recorded by the J.B.'s four months after the March band uprising. ◆

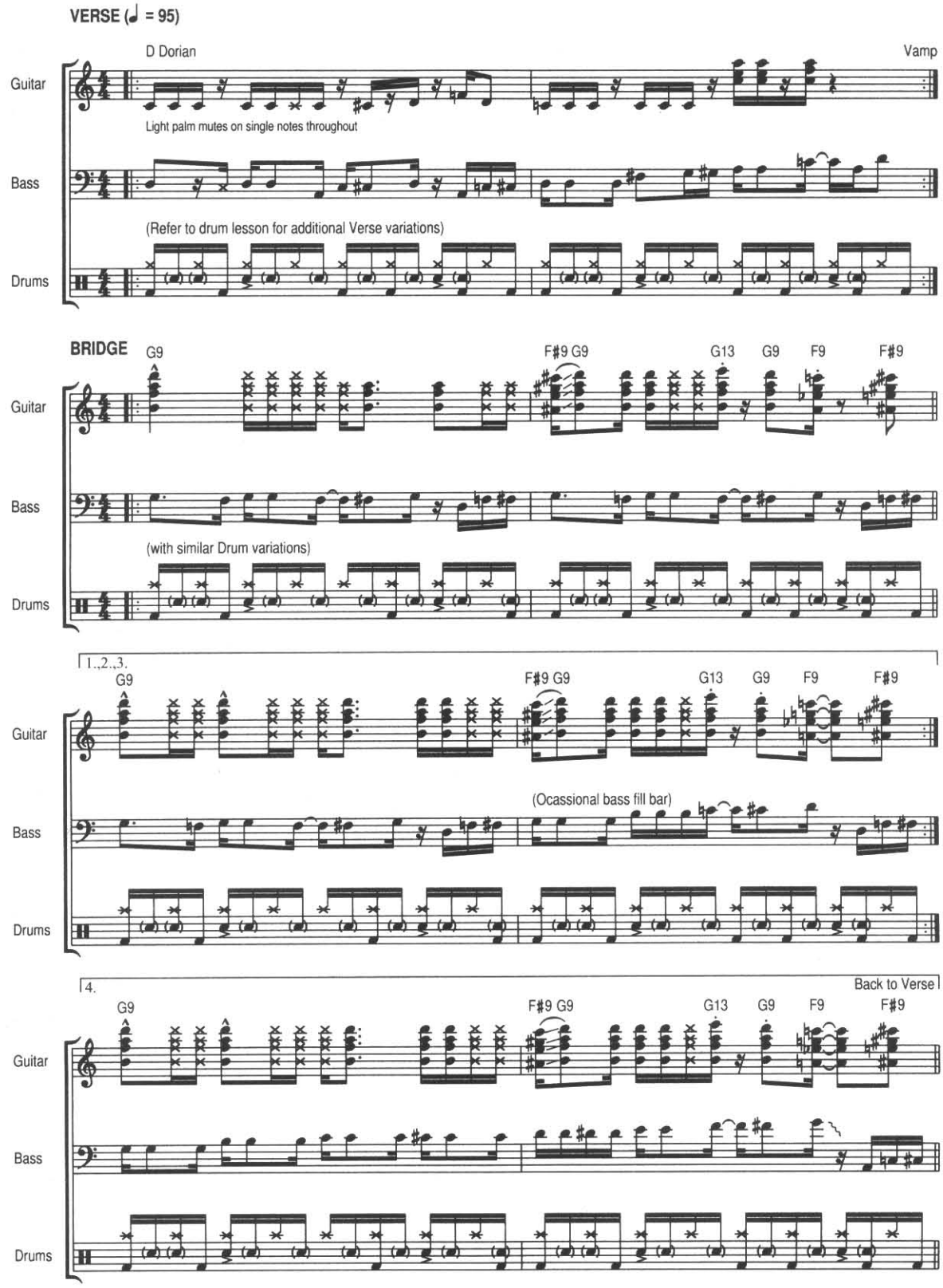


© David Redfern/Retna Ltd.

James Brown with Phelps "Catfish" Collins.

GIVE IT UP OR TURNIT A LOOSE (SIMULATED LIVE VERSION) •master score•

CD 2 25 TRACK



CLYDE STUBBLEFIELD •drums•

The March exodus/firings didn't claim Clyde Stubblefield, although his absence from the studio roster during the J.B.'s era made it appear that way. Clyde's visibility was reduced in the early '70s as he began to drift in and out of the band. Further reducing his playing time was the fact that James Brown began to rely more and more on the hot hand that "Jab'o" Starks was dealing. Clyde wasn't part of the March mutiny. He had split from the band in January of '70 but returned in June just in time to record this new version of "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose." He would go in and out the door several more times before leaving for good in March of 1972.

One of Clyde's last gifts to the band, his "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose" performance, matched James Brown's reworked version of this older tune with his own reworked version of an older drum groove. A few subtle changes in the kick drum can't disguise the sanctified "Funky Drummer" beat. There is, however, a major distinction in the hi-hat pattern, which now simulates the original sixteenth-note feel by distributing the constant flow of notes through the combined motion of the hi-hat, ghosted snare, and kick drum. The intermediate verse groove is almost identical to the original "Funky Drummer" sixteenth-note hi-hat pattern, and it allows you to gradually build up to the more complex simulated sixteenth-note pattern of "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose." The "A," "B," and "C" examples show several of the variations that Clyde plays in this track. The bridge section is essentially a combination of all three of these permutations.

While the basic grooves between these two tunes are similar, the tempo and feel are vastly different. The simulated live version of "Give It Up" is much faster than the more sedate "Funky Drummer." This probably accounts for Clyde's change to an eighth-note hi-hat format from the original sixteenth-note feel. The infectious spunk and enthusiasm of the young bucks who Clyde was paired with on this track also resulted in his taking a much more aggressive and physical attitude than the more relaxed posture he assumed with the older jazz and blues veterans of the "Funky Drummer" period. This is no longer just solid fatback drumming. It's a savage assault on drum heads pushed to the point of breakage. Maybe this was just Clyde's way of letting the new kids know that "the old man" could still throw down. ◆

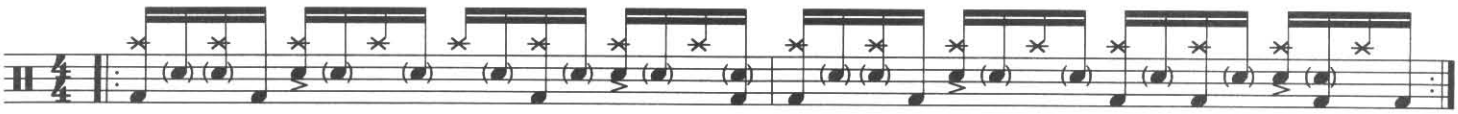
VERSE GROOVE A

ADDITIONAL VERSE VARIATIONS

VERSE GROOVE B

VERSE GROOVE C

BRIDGE



DRUM LESSON

CD 2 26 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE A

BASIC VERSE GROOVE B

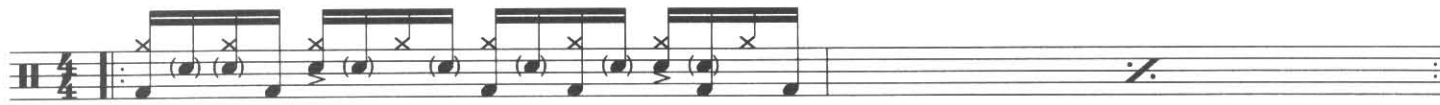
BASIC VERSE GROOVE C

INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE A

INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE B

INTERMEDIATE VERSE GROOVE C

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE A



ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE B

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE C

ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE

WILLIAM "BOOTSY" COLLINS •bass•

At some point in their career, almost every musician eventually experiences a situation in which they are trying to re-create a cover tune in their own style. Where do you start? How do you go about it? How much should you digress from the original? Of course there are no rules to topics like this, but studying what others have done in similar situations can often give you ideas. One of "Bootsy" Collins' first decisions in reinterpreting this song was determining whether or not he would emulate the stutter-step feel of Charles Sherrell's original bass part. Opting for more elongated types of lines, "Bootsy" still incorporates a few motifs note-for-note to connect the two versions.

In the first measure of the verse—which is essentially a repetitive two-bar vamp—"Bootsy" borrows the second and third beats of Charles Sherrell's first measure ("D," "D," "C," "C♯," "D") almost verbatim (he adds a sixteenth-note pickup, "A," at the end of the second beat). In the second bar, he makes a dramatic departure from the original version with a busy, syncopated figure based on a D7th arpeggio. "Bootsy" reverts to the first approach in the bridge by again borrowing from Sherrell for the third beat of every measure ("F," "F♯," "G"). Then, major variations occur in the various fill bars he plays, particularly the two-measure ascending G7th line leading back to the verse. (Dig the chromatic scale walking up the "G" string through these two measures.)

After studying four different "Bootsy" Collins transcriptions, the only conclusion that you can draw from his style so far is that you can't draw conclusions. He defies categorization. Bypassing the much more complex topics of feel and emotion, even more finite analytical approaches fall short: the basic building block of "Sex Machine" was the octave; "Super Bad" followed a more traditional root-fifth format; "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothing" worked four-note arpeggios to death; and "Give It Up" fused all three together in a bold chromatic setting. If you still have the need to draw some generalizations from "Bootsy" Collins' style before you feel that you've gotten your money's worth, then try these on for size:

1) "Bootsy" probably recorded these lines wearing platform shoes with higher heels than the ones you have on your feet right now.

2) If you are not willing to spend a serious amount of time practicing and learning how to play his bass lines, they *will* kick your behind. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 95)

D Dorian

Vamp

BRIDGE

G9

1.,2.,3.

(occasional fill bar)

4.

Back to Verse

PHELPS "CATFISH" COLLINS •guitar•

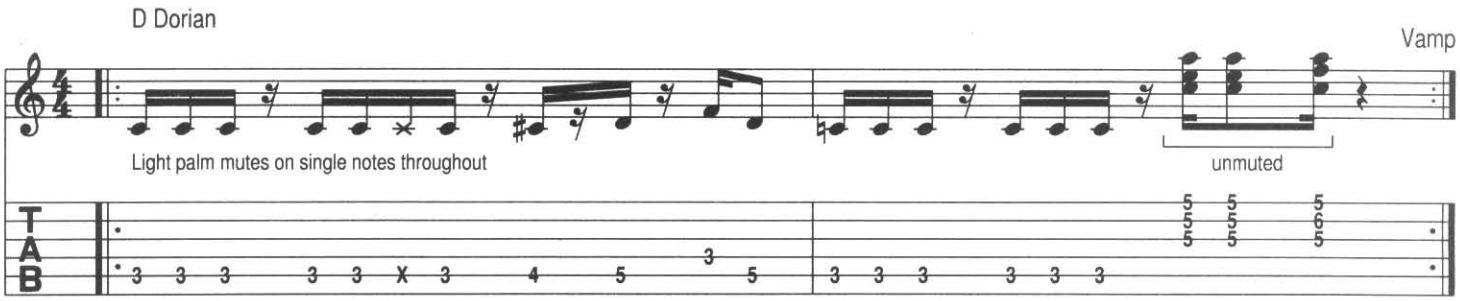
CD 2 28 TRACK

"**Bootsy" Collins' solution** to re-covering this early hit was to throw out eighty percent of the original bass line and rework it with his own ideas. Brother "Catfish" took a less radical approach and stayed a bit closer to the 1968 studio version. "Catfish's" artistry becomes evident as his subtle revisions give birth to a guitar part that bears his own trademark while still paying respect to the earlier concepts of Jimmy Nolen and "Country" Kellum.

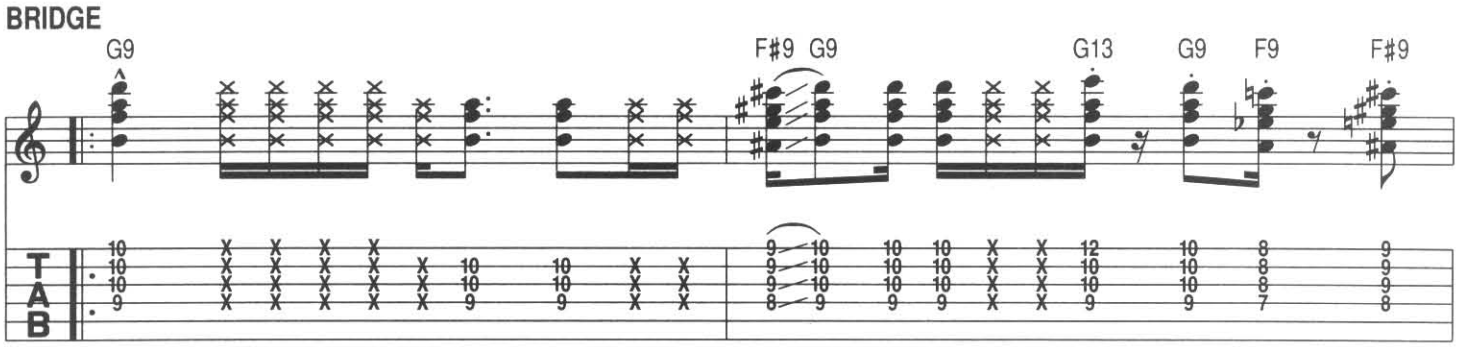
This is most apparent in the first bar of the verse, as "Catfish" walks up chromatically from "C," to "C♯," to "D" during the second and third beats of the main guitar theme. He's obviously alluding to Jimmy Nolen's original line, but he doesn't want to just copy the "C" and two "D's" that Nolen played, so he takes the half-step, chromatic route. "Catfish" also breaks up the line and punctuates it with a few three-note chord voicings in the second bar, which were not found in the original version.

The bridge stays close to the feel and spirit of "Country" Kellum's G9th rhythm work, but while Kellum's chords are ringy and sustained, "Catfish" chooses to take the scratch route, laying down a much choppier and percussive groove. He also adds the 13th voicing that he had originally introduced to the band in "Sex Machine," and re-states the chromatic idea he developed in the verse by playing F9 and F♯9 as approach chords to the G9th. ◆

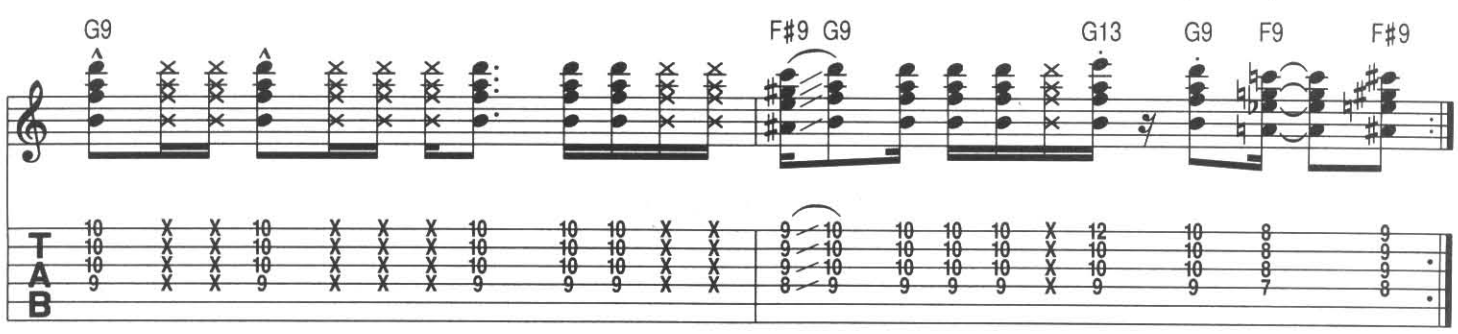
VERSE (♩ = 95)



BRIDGE



Play 4 times, then back to Verse



chapter 20

HOT PANTS, PT. 1

recorded may, 1971

The New Age, kinder, gentler James Brown only lasted five or six months before the old control bug bit him again. As he explains in his autobiography, "A lot of times, a band will start trying to dominate and dictate to me, and I don't like that. Or they'll think the music is all them. That's why I've had stormy times with my bands over the years."

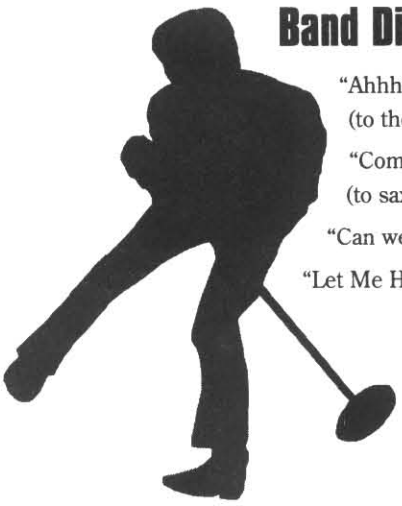
The Collins brothers saw things from a different angle when Brown began pulling the original Pacemakers horn section players off the live gigs in deference to some of the returning, original '60s cast. As "Catfish" Collins recalls, "Things started getting shaky. We came to James Brown as a unit but he had been trying to break us up for a while. He kept getting bolder and bolder and finally, we had enough so we split."

The breakup occurred shortly after the entourage returned home from the triumphant March 1971 concerts in Paris, where they recorded the live *Love, Power, Peace* album. The mind, expanding possibilities of George Clinton's "Mothership" seemed much more appealing than the Godfather's restrictive regimen. Brown, sensing the imminent departure, had already found his new J.B.'s in Small's Paradise, a Harlem club owned by basketball great Wilt Chamberlain. The band on stage that night featured a twenty-five-year-old vocalist-bassist named Fred Thomas and a raw, street funk guitar player named Hearlon "Cheese" Martin.

"Me and 'Cheese' learned to play together in that band," recalls Thomas. "When we started out, he couldn't play no guitar and I couldn't play no bass, but that changed as time went on. When James came into the club that night and sat in with us, he asked us if we knew 'Sex Machine.' We had just learned the tune a few weeks before and we were kickin' it. We played it to the 'T' right up to the 'Can I hit it and quit it.' He was thrilled by it and hired us on the spot." ("Cheese" began working with James Brown around the time of the "Talkin' Loud & Sayin' Nothing" session eight months before Fred Thomas came on board.)

Recently returned exile and newly appointed bandleader Fred Wesley was given the job of showing the new recruits the ropes. His expertise and communication skills were not lost on Fred Thomas, who is quick to point out, "Fred Wesley was the greatest bandleader I ever had in my life."

"Hot Pants," the last track Brown would record for King Records, immediately showed the Wesley influence in the trombone-propelled horn lines and simple, gut-bucket groove. The record shot up to #1 on the R&B charts within a few weeks, catapulting James Brown back into his accustomed habitat. Tumultuous years loomed on the horizon as he began his Polydor era, but for the time being, peace and stability had been restored to the Godfather's operation. ◆



Band Directions—Godfather Style Pt. 4

"Ahhhhhhhh NO! No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No, No."
(to the rhythm section in "Give It Up Or Turnit A Loose")

"Come on Robert! Blow me some 'Trane Brother."
(to saxophonist Robert McCollough in "Super Bad")

"Can we hit it and quit?" (from "Sex Machine")

"Let Me Have It! Unh! Unh! Unh! Unh!" (from "Let Yourself Go")

HOT PANTS, PT. 1 •master score•

CD 2 29 TRACK

VERSE (♩ = 93)

Eb9

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

Eb9

Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

Courtesy of Allan Slutsky

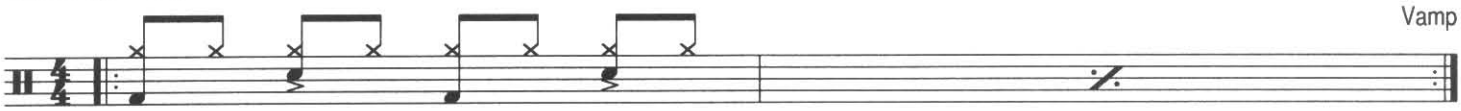
L to R: Fred Thomas, Johnny Griggs, Jimmy Nolan, Clyde Stubblefield, "Jab'o" Starks

JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

"**Jab'o" Starks is proving** to be quite a musical chameleon. Having spent the last six years adapting to the trailblazing funk of the Nolen-Kellum-Odum era and then matching the thunderbolts and lightning of the Collins brothers, he now tones down his act to mesh with the uncomplicated street approach of the new J.B.'s. This is the stripped-down, economy model of R&B grooves—no air conditioning, no clock, no radio, no leather interior, no railroad air horns—just three solid minutes of Boom-Bop, Boom-Bop.

You've all played this groove thousands of times, so the lesson is not the pattern itself or the notes on the paper. It's what you hear on the original recording. The stability of the beat, the way the hi-hat disappears into the tambourine because of the tightness of the lock, and the disciplined, yet relaxed control over the entire groove are qualities that can only come from years of experience. If you can play this groove and make it feel as good as "Jab'o" does, then turn the page and move on. Otherwise, pull out your metronomes and get to work. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 93)



FRED THOMAS •bass•

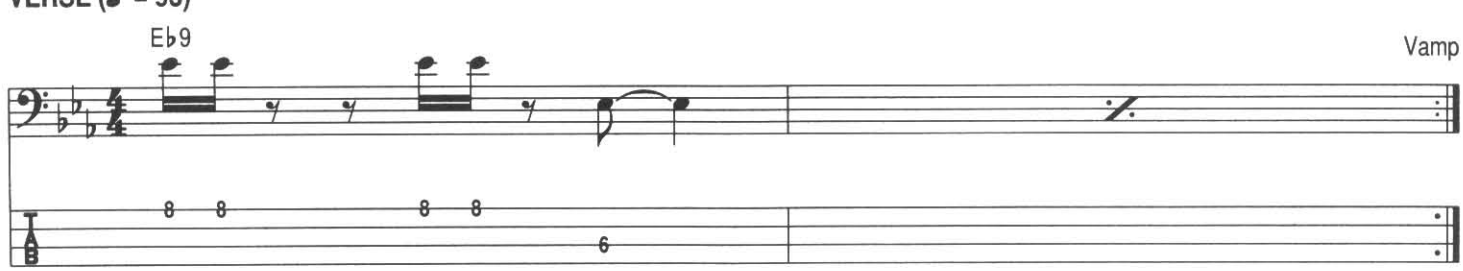
James Brown had had his fill of virtuosity. Unable to control the tempestuous "Bootsy" Collins, his new agenda was to find a bassist with a solid bottom end that he could work with. Fred Thomas and his mid-sixties Fender Precision were custom made for that role. "Nobody plays bass my style," says Thomas. "I play with just my thumb and first finger. James liked that 'cause I gave him that bottom cushioning and just laid it there."

Brown also liked the fact that his new apprentice could take direction, but Fred views himself as much more than just a musical Dictaphone. "James sang me most of my lines," explains Fred, "but the way he would give it to you would make you shake your head and say, 'What kind of line is this?' He'd give it to you so blunt, you felt you were playing against the grain. You'd just take the line, lock into it, and move it around a bit to give it a good feelin'. You had to make the line *dance*. That's the way it usually happened in the studio. The only line that was all mine from the start was 'Gonna Have A Funky Good Time.'" (This song was released as "Doing It To Death.")

Fred's interpretation of the bass part JB sang to him in the studio did a lot more than just make the *line* dance; his brawny, direct ostinato played an essential role in making all of *America* dance to this #1 hit. Set to a lightly syncopated rhythmic pattern, Fred just played the root note of the chord and its octave. It doesn't get much simpler than this, but that doesn't lessen the impact and importance of the line. Don't believe me; just try playing a busy technical figure against this track and watch the groove disintegrate under your fingers.

If you are a beginning bass player and you're wondering where to start in this book, this user-friendly line is as good a place as any. Here is your chance to put away all technical concerns over fingerings, reading, and speed, and just marry yourself to the kick and snare drum so you can find out where your groove is. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 93)



ROBERT COLEMAN AND HEARLON "CHEESE" MARTIN •guitars•

CD 2 32 TRACK

In keeping with time-honored James Brown traditions, it's quite appropriate that the maiden voyage of the new guitar duo is on an E♭9th chord, 5th fret position. One of the most prominent guitar mixes in James Brown's recorded catalog, "Hot Pants" features "Cheese" Martin on scratch guitar and Robert Coleman with a simple, repetitive blues lick up at the 11th position.

Martin's scratch rhythm had its origin in a tune cut eleven months earlier. "Catfish" Collins had developed the same steady, sixteenth-note feel in the verse of "Super Bad." Previously, all scratch parts on James Brown records featured combinations of eighth and sixteenth-notes, ties, and rests to create syncopations. In both "Super Bad" and "Hot Pants," the *only* unit of scratch rhythm is the sixteenth-note, and there are no rests or ties. The rhythmic accents that make these guitar parts feel funky and syncopated come from "choking" or deadening the strings with the left hand to create the percussive muted notes (marked with the X's). The right hand has a "no-brainer" role. All it has to do is play a steady down-up-down-up strumming pattern of even sixteenth-notes.

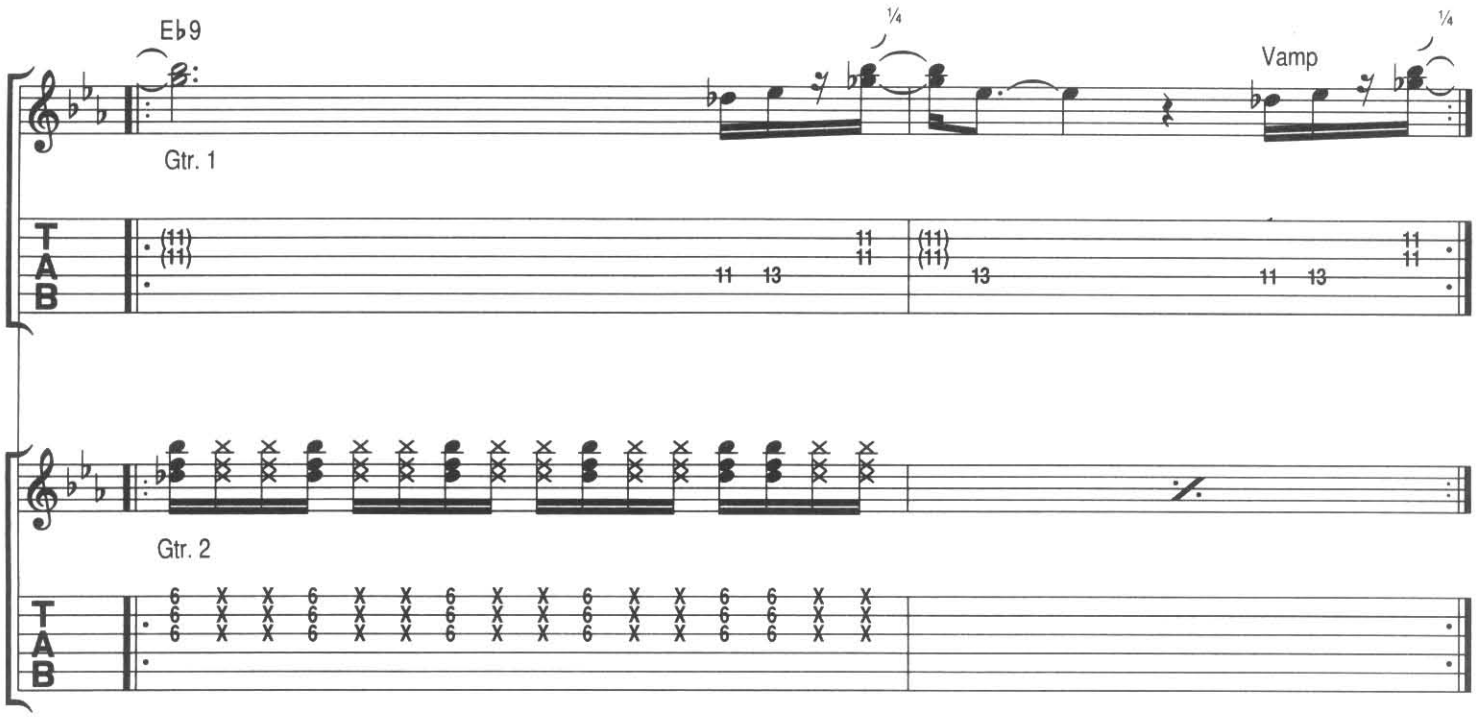
If the overall sonority of the bass and guitar sections sounds different to you, your ears aren't deceiving you. With the departure of "Catfish" Collins, the longstanding (and unofficial) James Brown decree that all his bassists, guitarists, and drummers must play Vox was finally rescinded. Fred Thomas played a mid-'60s P-Bass, "Cheese" played a Tele' and Robert Coleman worked out on a Fender Jaguar. This influx of new instruments was a breath of fresh air to a sonic palette that had been in need of an overhaul for some time. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 93)

E♭9

Gtr. 1

Gtr. 2


E♭9
Gtr. 1
Vamp
Gtr. 2

chapter 21

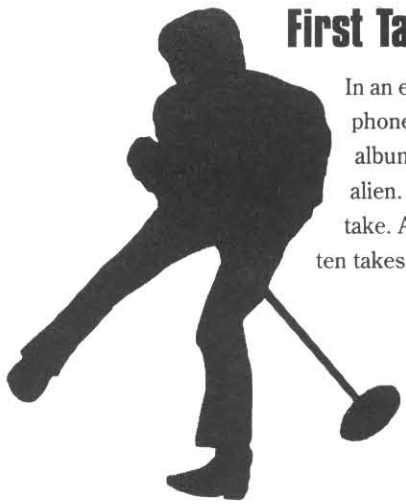
MAKE IT FUNKY, PT. 1

recorded july, 1971

Simulating a party atmosphere on recordings was a very hip thing to do in the late '60s and early '70s. Joe Tex's did it in "Skinny Legs and All." The Impressions' "We're A Winner," Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," and James Brown's "Make It Funky Pt. 1" also followed the same script. But while Joe Tex's studio audience was having a staged laugh at the expense of a particular female's anatomical deficiencies, and the initial revelry on the Impressions' and Marvin Gaye's recordings masked the more serious issues about to be addressed, "Make It Funky's" celebration was a more genuine and organic development; it was a primitive, ritualistic orgy paying homage to the simple joys of funk.

After the instability of the past few years, Brown was back on top of the world, so why shouldn't he celebrate? His stage entourage had swelled to twenty-one pieces, there weren't enough days in the year to fulfill all the concert bookings, he owned three radio stations, and his new band had just helped him deliver a #1 hit on his first single for his new label, Polydor.

Shrewdly directing the musical proceedings in between his percolating Hammond organ fills, James Brown's pride in his music's instant rapport with the common man is in strong evidence: the loose, slightly out of tune horn section; the small room production ambience of the short, tight reverb; the unrestrained, almost tribal group chants of *"make it funky;"* topped off by a vocalized soul-food buffet that includes everything from neck bones to grits and gravy... Dag, Homes! You might think you wuz in the middle of a Georgia block party on the Fourth of July. ◆



First Takes Pt. 1

In an era in which many a recording act has spent a solid week trying to find just the right SM57 microphone and 4x12 guitar cabinet combination (and then is proud of itself for completing a ten-song album in under three months), the concept of cutting a hit in an hour or two must seem completely alien. For James Brown, it was the norm. In fact, much of his best material came together on the first take. After rehearsing the tune a few times in the studio, one or two takes was all it usually took. The ten takes that were necessary to get "I Got The Feelin'" to the cutting table was extremely rare.

MAKE IT FUNKY, PT. 1 •master score•

VERSE (♩ = 95)

D9

Vamp

Guitar

*occasional x's as variation

Bass

Drums

BRIDGE

G9

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

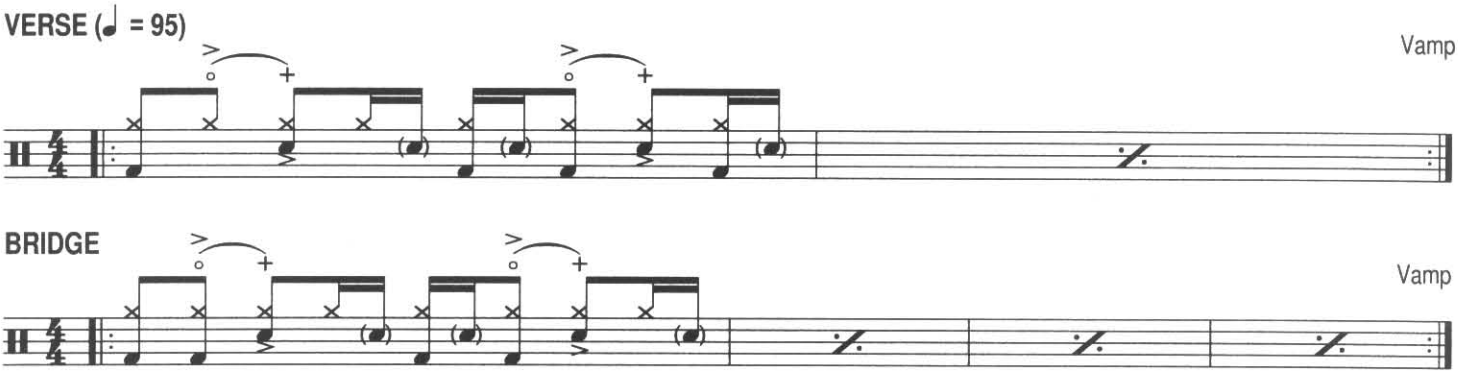
JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

After the metronomic simplicity of his "Hot Pants" groove, "Jab'o" Starks reverts to form, bringing back some of the drum complexity and instrumental inter-dependence concepts of his earlier recording sessions. "Make It Funky" is a textbook study in how the kick drum works with a bass line, although it doesn't become apparent until you see the subtle changes it goes through from the verse to the bridge.

The verse kick drum on the "and" of beat "four" helps to support Fred Thomas's two sixteenth-note bass notes in the same rhythmic position (the "C" and "C♯"). When those same two bass notes are deleted in the bridge, Jab'o moves the "and" of "four" kick drum to the "and" of beat "one" to emphasize the new bridge bass line at that point. The bass's three eighth-notes at the beginning of every measure in the bridge ("F," "F♯,"and "G") are now totally supported and played in unison with two kick drums and a snare. Even though these ideas developed spontaneously in the gut as opposed to being written out by an arranger, you'd be doing yourself a disservice if you bypassed the thought and design involved here and just looked at it as groovin' to a street jam.

African and Cuban drummers often make cryptic references to a drum feel they call "playing in the darkness." What they are talking about is that relaxed, behind-the-beat attitude in which the drummer implies a light swing feel but does not wholly commit to it (similar to the half-swung, half-straight feel Nat Kendricks used on "Think"). This mystical zone of darkness was definitely the habitat of "Jab'o" Starks during this recording session. He travels even deeper into it when changing to the bridge as the tempo slows down a hair and he lays back just a little more.

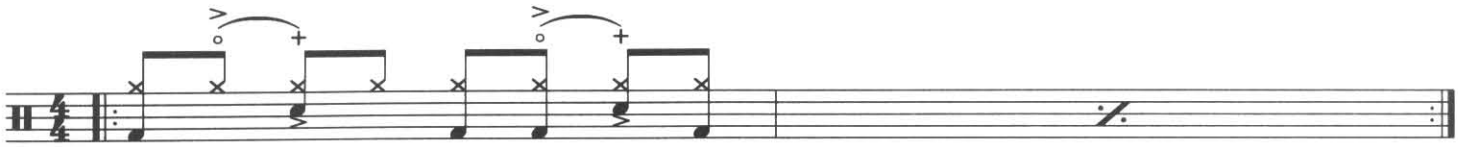
The effect is exhilarating while at the same time, jarring. There is a collision of two worlds. After the lax, almost cavalier attitude of the horn section in the verse, they make a complete about-face in the bridge, delivering a terse, dead on the beat horn vamp that wrestles with the looser drum and bass feel for predominance. While this may sound like a formula for a total groovistic meltdown, the tension and drama of this battle is what makes the track come alive. ◆



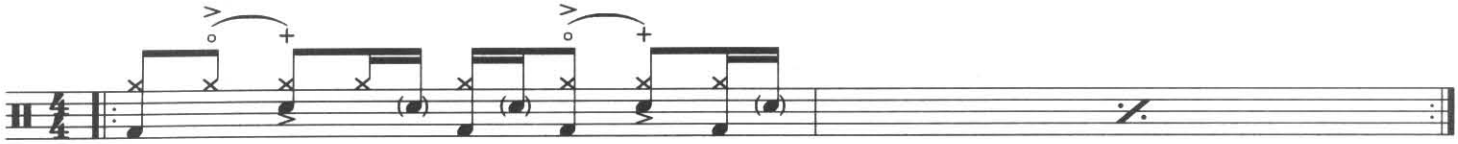
DRUM LESSON

CD 2 34 TRACK

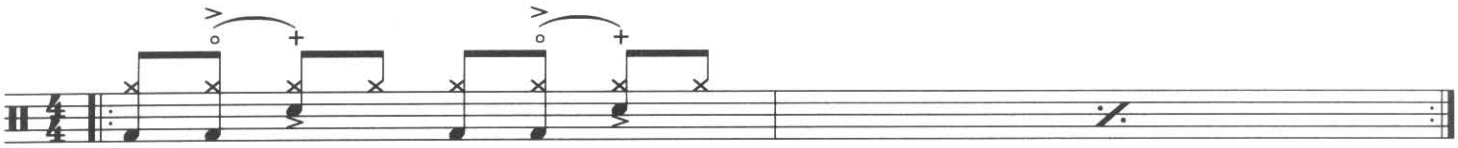
BASIC VERSE GROOVE



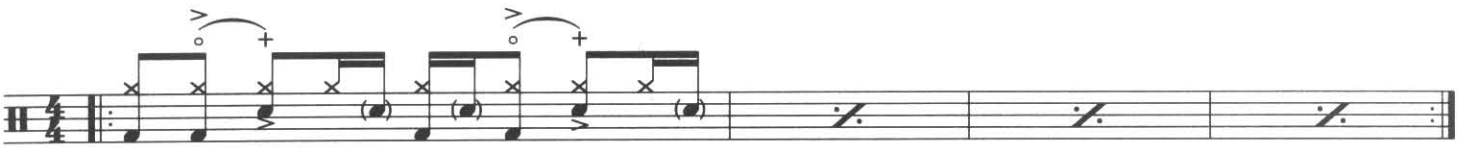
ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



BASIC BRIDGE GROOVE



ORIGINAL BRIDGE GROOVE

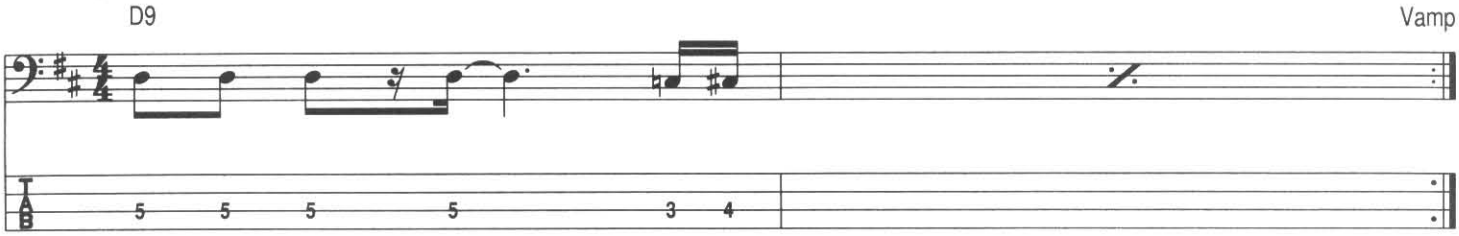


FRED THOMAS •bass•

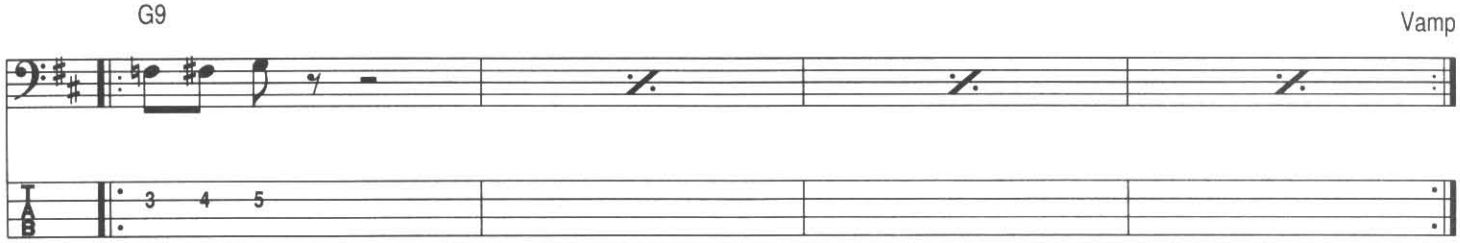
CD 2 35 TRACK

This is the type of no-nonsense, heavy-bottom bass playing that caught James Brown's attention and landed Fred Thomas his gig. Built entirely around chordal roots and chromatic walk-ups from the flat seventh scale degree back to the root, Thomas's straight, uncomplicated rhythmic line sets the stage for the more involved syncopations of "Cheese" Martin and the horn section. The only variance to this pattern occurs in the verse, when Fred periodically substitutes a percussive ghost-note in place of the sixteenth-note rest on beat "two." ◆

VERSE (♩ = 95)



BRIDGE

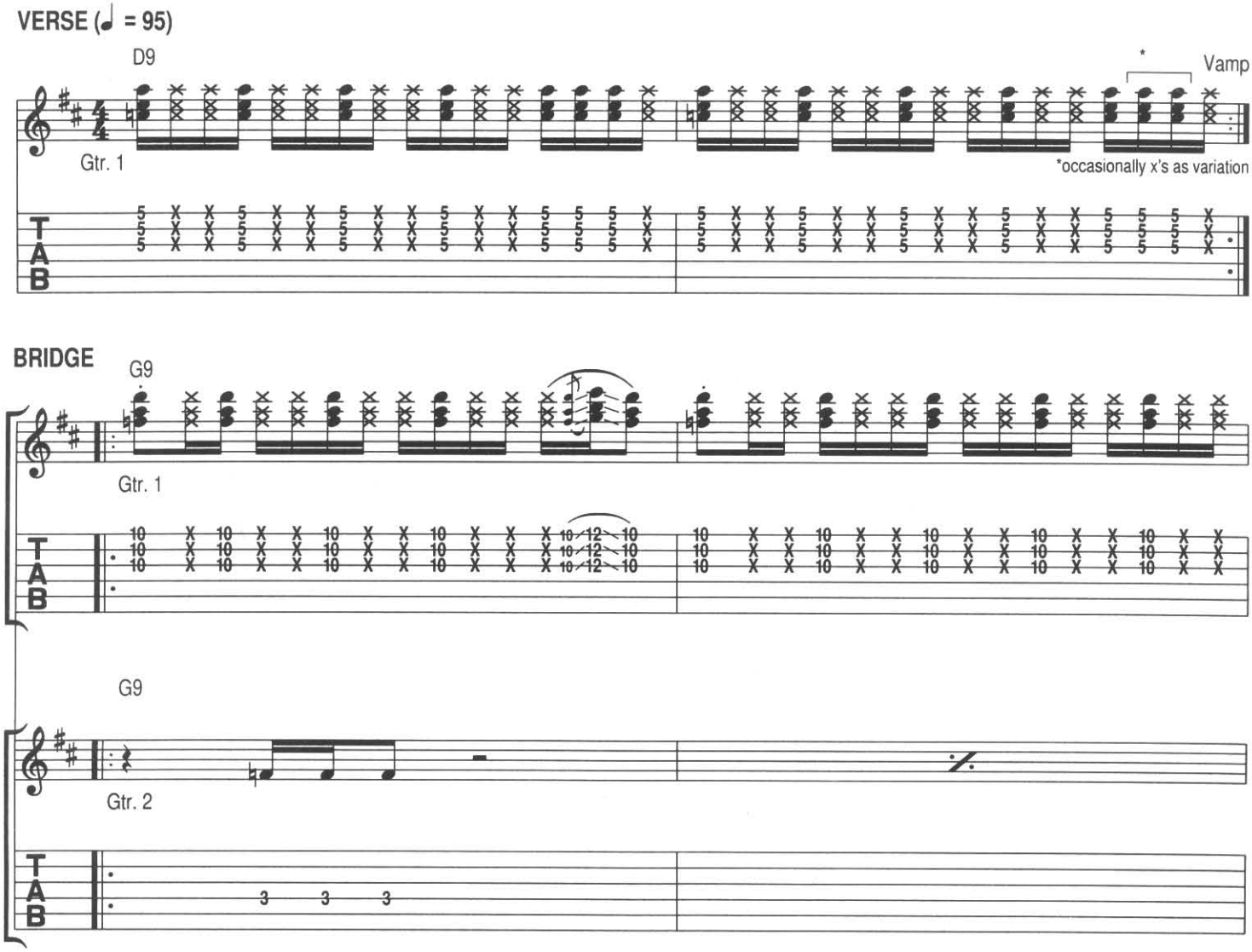


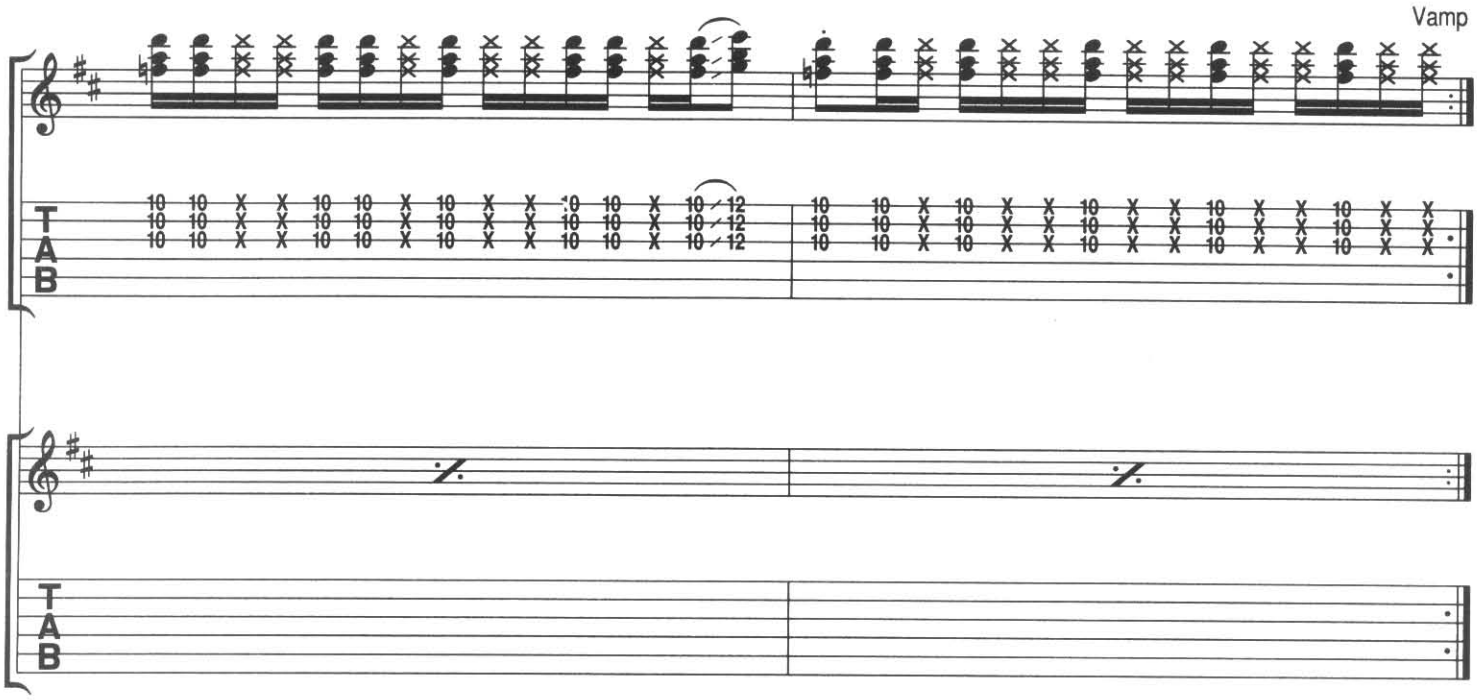
ROBERT COLEMAN AND HEARLON "CHEESE" MARTIN •guitars•

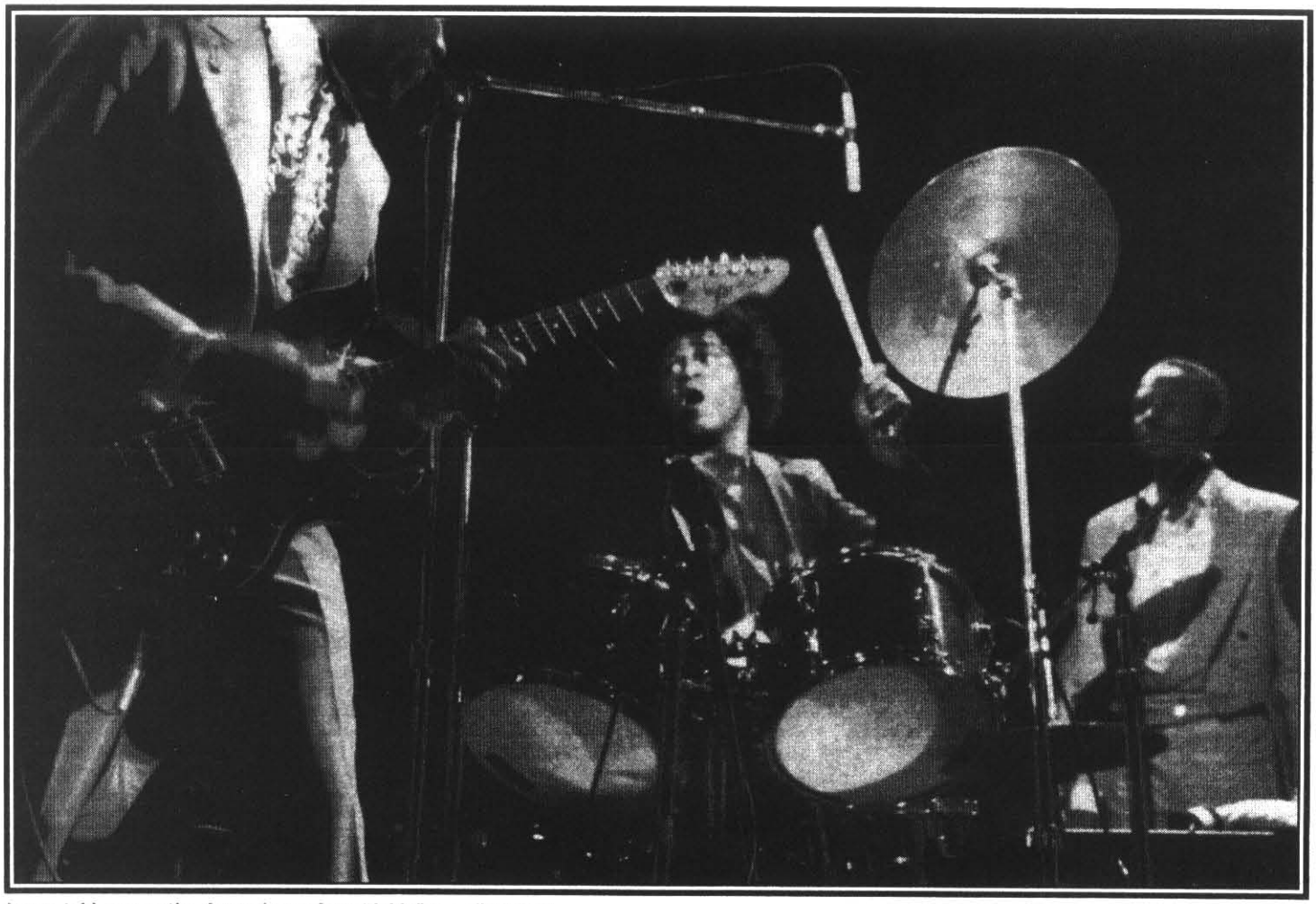
CD 2 36 TRACK

If pitch transposers were available in 1971, "Cheese" Martin could have almost taken his "Hot Pants" strum, transposed it down a half-step, and dropped it right into the track for "Make It Funky" without anyone being the wiser. If it weren't for a minute variation on beat "four," the verse guitar rhythm would be a carbon copy of the "Hot Pants" strumming pattern. In contrast, the bridge guitar pattern is much more improvisational with a steady flow of impromptu rhythmic modifications. "Cheese" also throws in a few change-ups with a G9th voicing that slides up from the tenth fret, to the twelfth, and back again to the tenth fret. This makes the fingered chord shift from a 9th voicing, to a 6th voicing, and then back to a 9th.

Robert Coleman's three "F naturals" in the bridge's second guitar part may seem simplistic and uninteresting by themselves, but in context with the other instruments, they reveal themselves to be an integral part of a clever two-way conversation with the bass line. As the three-note bass part ends on the downbeat of beat "two," Coleman overlaps Fred Thomas's last note with the first of his three "F's" in a statement-counterstatement relationship. It's a good thing that Robert wasn't getting paid by the note, because his paycheck for this track would have been two dollars and thirty-seven cents. Luckily, James Brown paid by the feel, and he recognized a bargain when he heard it. ◆







© David Siegel

James taking over the drum chores from "Jab'o" on a live date!

chapter 22

PAPA DON'T TAKE NO MESS, PT. 1

recorded august, 1973

James Brown and his band were in transition in late 1972. The guitar department was again under reconstruction in the wake of Robert Coleman's departure. The void was temporarily filled by the cameo appearance of a ghost from the past, as Bobby Roach made the bewildering quantum leap from 1959's "Bewildered" to 1972's "Get On The Good Foot." By the end of the year, their quest for independence aborted, Jimmy Nolen and Maceo Parker also returned to the fold. "One thing about James," Maceo told writer Cliff White: "He might not always like it but he understands why you might want to try certain things of your own. And if it fails for you, he's waiting with open arms for you to come back. It's almost like you always have a home. You can't beat that."

James Brown also had a home that he could always go back to when he needed to find himself: Augusta, GA. He had been searching out his musical message with two alternating casts: his own Fred Wesley-led J.B.'s, and a revolving door cast comprised of the cream of New York's studio session players. Randy and Michael Brecker, Jimmy Madison, Hugh McCracken, Gordon Edwards, Joe Farrell, Jon Faddis, David Sanborn, and every other major studio name in the Big Apple had helped Brown and arranger-conductor Dave Matthews cut tunes like "I Got A Bag of My Own," "King Heroin," and "Public Enemy #1 Pt. 1." The Godfather continued to crack the top ten with a variety of message songs and big-band funk jams, but something was clearly missing. Returning to his home soil in January of '73, a revitalized James Brown rebounded with "Doing It To Death," a track cut at Augusta's International Studios that celebrated the first reunion session with newly returned veterans Nolen and Parker.

The rebirth was short-lived. Already reeling from a drought of hits and negative press for supporting Richard Nixon's reelection campaign, Brown was struck with the cruelest blow of all when his eldest son Teddy was killed in a car crash in upstate New York. Trying to avoid a complete emotional breakdown, the Godfather performed in Columbus, Ohio the night after his son's death. Once again, Augusta was the spiritual cure as he returned home to record "Papa Don't Take No Mess Pt. 1."

This time around, JB relied on his band more than usual as he struggled to find a creative spark beneath the shroud of grief that enveloped him. "Papa" was born when an informal studio groove conceived by Fred Wesley and "Jab'o" Starks caught his attention. Before you could say "Hit me!" the Godfather was back, putting his own stamp on the musical proceedings and directing traffic en route to his newest #1 hit. The song didn't appear on vinyl until October of 1974 when Brown included it on his double LP release, *Hell*. The fourteen-minute album version was cut down to a more manageable four-and-a-half minute length for the single release. ◆

PAPA DON'T TAKE NO MESS, PT. 1 •master score•

VERSE (♩ = 94)

G9 D9 G9 D9

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

(w/wah-wah)

Bass

(See Bass lesson for Verse variations)

Drums

G9 D9 G9 D9

Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

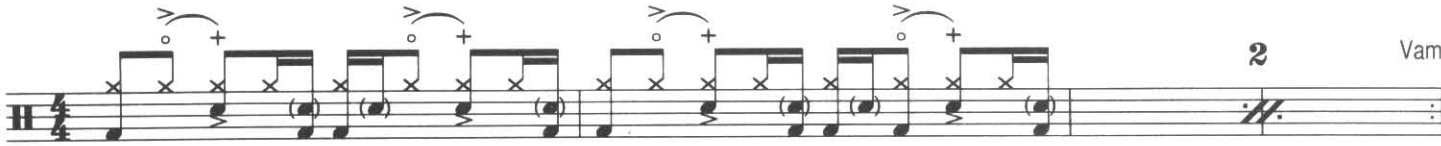
Drums

CD 2 37 TRACK

"**Jab'o" Starks apparently** doesn't believe in the separation of sacred and secular music. As long as they groove together, he'll combine ideas from any and all walks of life. Starks claims that his "Papa Don't Take No Mess" beat came from "years of listening and playing tambourine in The Holiness Church in Mobile, Alabama," but he admits that the beat also had its origins in a pattern he learned and used with Bobby "Blue" Bland. Regardless of where he found it, this track flat out swings—but not in the traditional way you'd expect. It's more of an implied quality that comes from the sixteenth-note interplay between the hi-hat and the ghosted snare drum. While the pattern, in and of itself, is not that hard to play, it's one of the most difficult feels in this book to duplicate.

Although not transcribed here, you should definitely go back to the original recording for a "Jab'o" Starks lesson in interactive drummer-vocalist procedures. Every time JB goes into his "Papa don't, Papa don't, Papa don't" routine, "Jab'o" is right there with him, alternately filling around and supporting the rhythms he's singing. Besides helping James to punctuate his phrases and lyrics, these fills also help to break up the repetitiveness of the rhythm section's groove and make the overall tempo breathe. "Jab'o" pushes the beat on the fills, nails the downbeat at the end of the figure with his crash cymbal and kick drum, and then puts on the brakes and pulls everything back into place by laying way back on the first available backbeat. James Brown may be controlling the checkbook, the stage presentation, the song's overall arrangement and format, and even the music's energy level, but there is no question as to who controls *this* groove. ◆

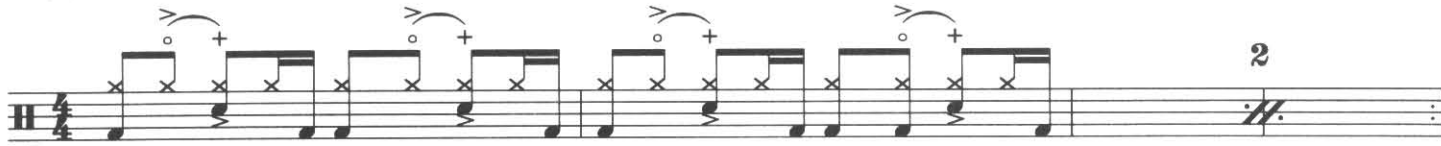
VERSE (♩ = 94)



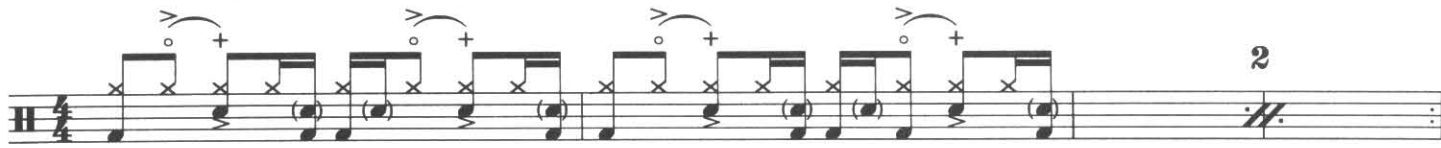
DRUM LESSON

CD 2 38 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE



ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE



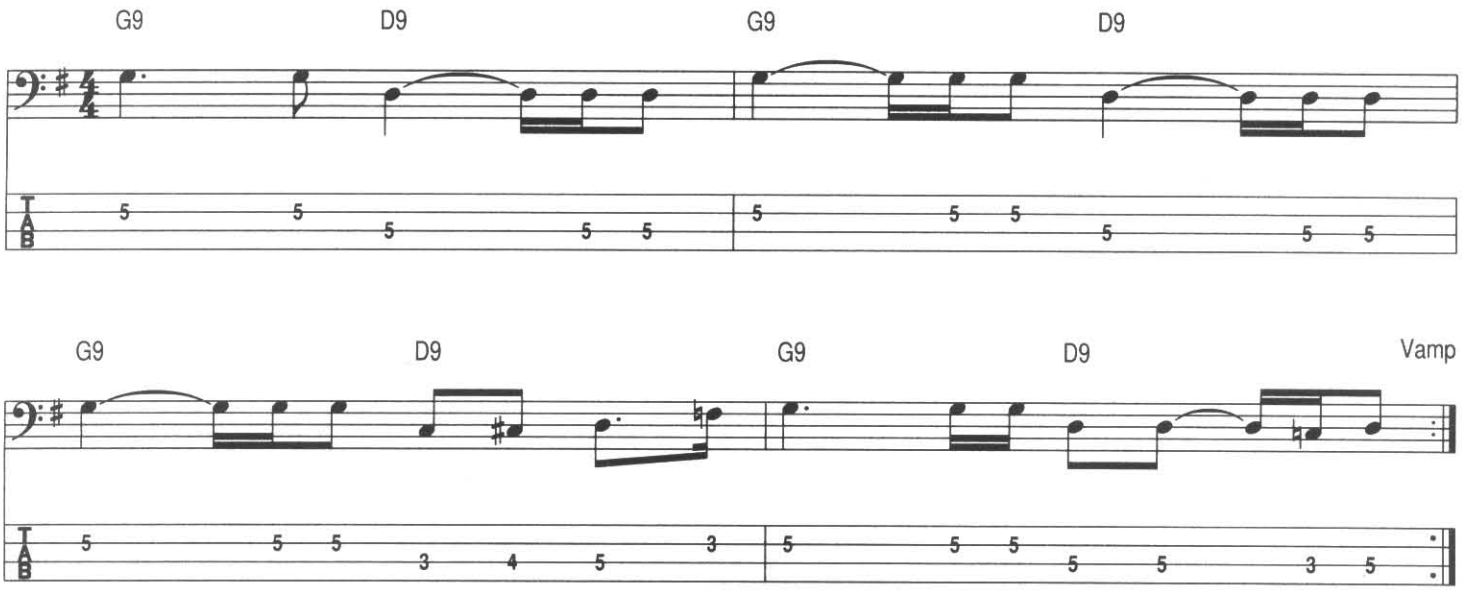
FRED THOMAS •bass•

CD 2 39 TRACK

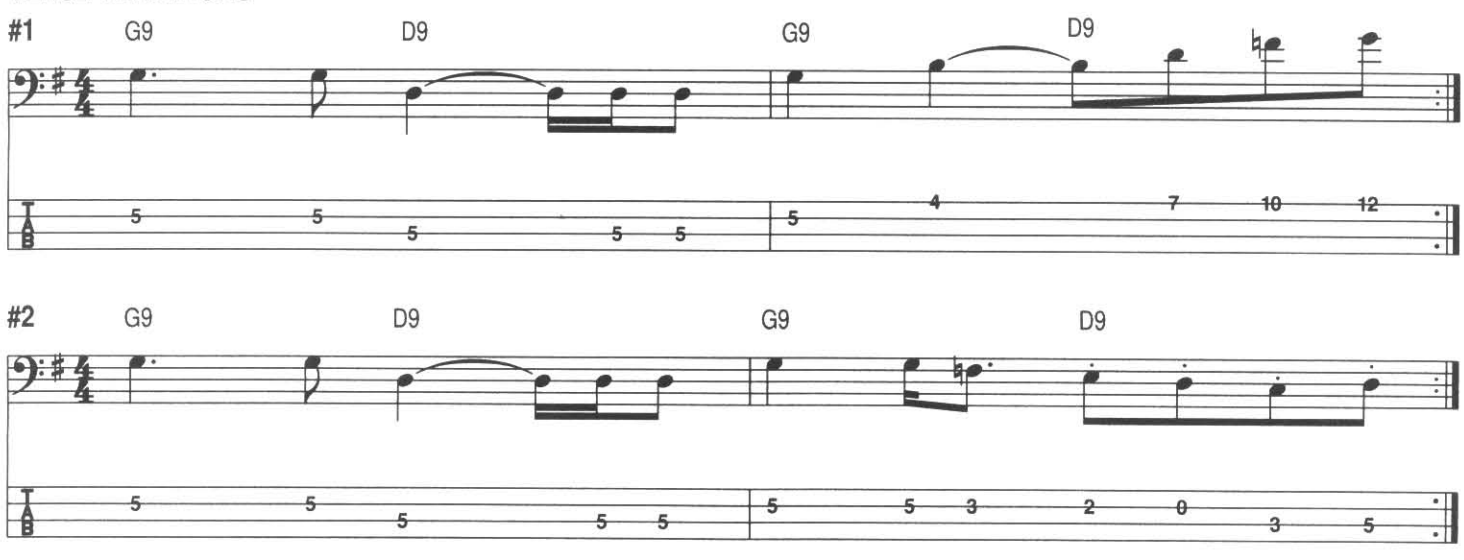
"**Papa Don't Take No Mess**" is Fred Thomas's graduation party. The routine bass line that started out as another quasi-dictated idea from the boss quickly underwent a metamorphosis. The butterfly that emerged from the cocoon several repeats into the song was Fred Thomas's signature performance. Itching to show what he could do since his maiden voyage on "Hot Pants," Fred uses James Brown's basic idea as a jumping-off point for an endless stream of melodic variations.

With close to half-a-dozen hits in his resume at this point, Fred Thomas had begun to emerge as a unique voice in the rich lineage of James Brown bassists. The constant interplay of Brown singing lines in his ear and Thomas's personal interpretations of these ideas resulted in a powerful fulfillment of the "one" and "three" concept JB had been pushing for years. Fred plays much more on the beat than any of his predecessors, particularly on the two beats favored by his boss. The ever-present sixteenth-note bass syncopations that were so identifiable with the "Bootsy" Collins era J.B.'s have now been pared down to fit the simpler and more direct Fred Wesley edition. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 94)



VERSE VARIATIONS



CD 2 40 TRACK

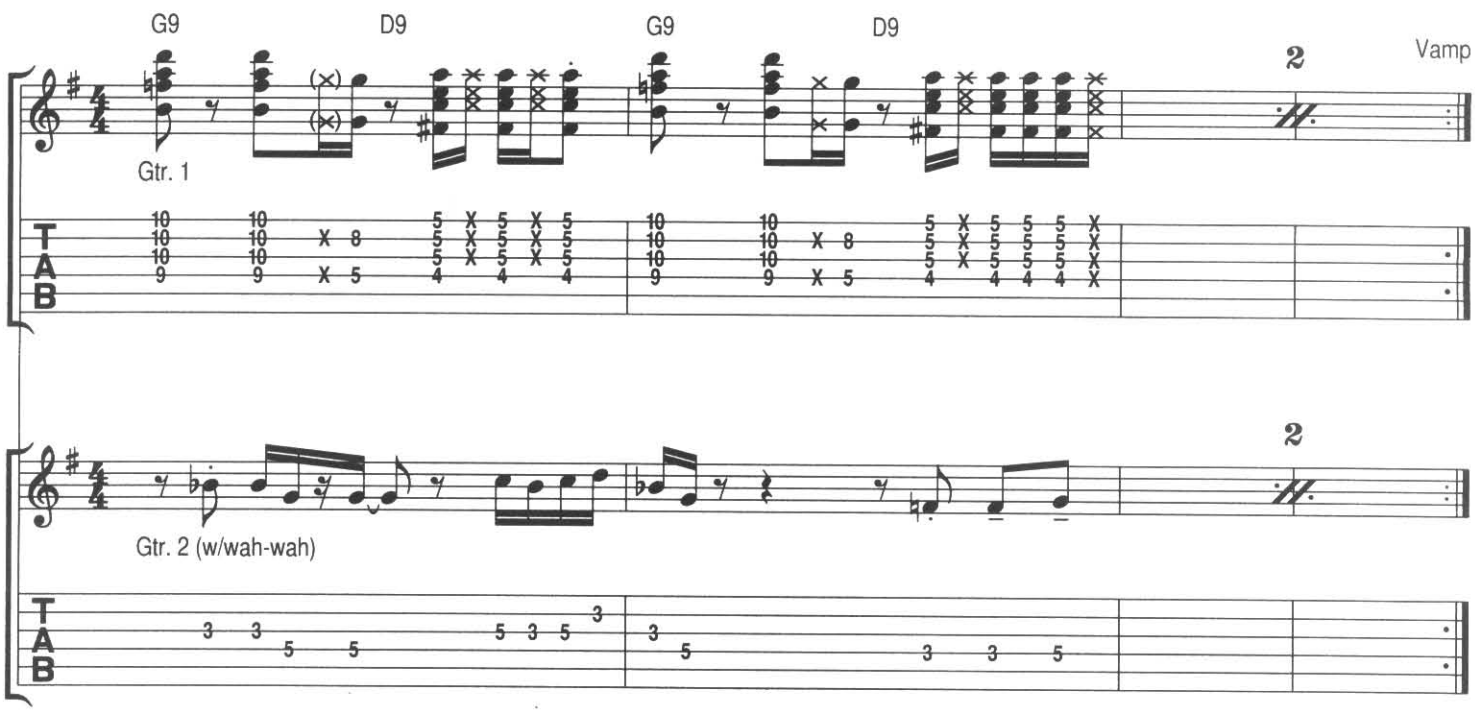
Jimmy Nolen didn't return from his stint with the King's Men all by himself. He brought along a friend he met on his "Funky Women" session. Arriving a bit late to the party, the wah-wah pedal finally made its entrance into James Brown's guitar section in August, 1973. Jimmy was apparently in a full-fledged wah-wah state of mind that month, playing it on both "The Payback" and "Papa Don't Take No Mess."

By the late '60s, Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton had already made this effect standard fare, but James Brown's guitarists had remained steadfast in their conservative approach. Even though the Vox guitars they were supplied with had built-in fuzz and wah-wahs, no one ever used them. The basic pentatonic figure Jimmy is playing usually wouldn't elicit a great deal of attention, but the fact that it's played with a wah-wah pedal earns it an historic citation. (Note: Jimmy also returned to the band with two new instruments: a Japanese Strat and a semi-hollow guitar called a Black Widow.)

While Nolen is trying to expand the band's horizons with new effects and ideas, "Cheese" Martin takes the opposite tack as he puts the finishing touches on his book *One Thousand and One Recipes For Strumming A 9th Chord*. By this time, you'd think that JB's guitarists would have exhausted the topic but "Cheese" somehow manages to put a new spin on this well worn theme.

The two guitar parts are as incongruous a pair as you'll ever find. Jimmy's single-note, midrange, wah-wah figure is dry as a bone. "Cheese," on the opposite extreme, is playing high register chordal voicings played straight into an amp with no effects—that is, if you consider reverb with a depth setting reminiscent of the delay time of the Grand Canyon to be "no effect." This is one *wet* guitar part! The old axiom about opposites attracting must be true, because these two parts were made for each other. ◆

VERSE (♩ = 94)



chapter 23

THE PAYBACK

recorded august, 1973

There are certain things in this world that a person with any degree of sanity just doesn't do. For instance, you don't tell Henry Aaron how to hit home runs; you don't tell Colonel Sanders how to fry chicken; and you don't tell James Brown that he isn't funky. Incredibly, that's what the producer of *It's Hell Up In Harlem* told him when "The Payback" was submitted for the film's soundtrack. The Godfather's entrance into the short-lived black film explosion of the early '70s was a bit late. Issac Hayes had scored big with *Shaft* in 1971 and Curtis Mayfield was still riding the wave of success that followed his 1972 masterpiece, *Superfly*. Nevertheless, James Brown's bottomless reservoir of confidence led him to expect a smash hit on the level of his predecessors.

Originally penned by Fred Wesley and "Jab'o" Starks, "The Payback" underwent major surgery as soon as James Brown walked into Augusta's International Studios. The song's original concept and lyrics had reflected the movie's opening scene. JB had his own agenda. Tearing up the chart and replacing it with lyrics about a personal crisis that occupied his thoughts at the time, he left the musicians to fend for themselves. "We got caught in the middle of an ocean without a paddle," "Jab'o" Starks said, describing the session in *The Billboard Book of Rhythm and Blues Hits*. "It was do or die—James had to make the record *then*. All we had was the rhythm. I just tried to hold it and make it solid."

When the tape of the song was delivered to the film's producer, it was rejected with the explanation, "It's not funky enough, babe." James Brown's initial outrage quickly subsided once he had the last laugh. The rejected song topped the R&B charts shortly after he released it himself in early '74. The film, on the other hand, nose dived like a concrete kite. Talk about paybacks! ◆

© Harry Weinger

Bassist reunion at James Brown's birthday party, Augusta Civic Center, May 3, 1996. L to R: Fred Thomas, Bernard Odum, and "Sweet" Charles Sherrell.

INTRO (♩ = 93)

B♭ Dorian

Guitar 1

↑ Don't play this note first time.

Guitar 2

Notes in parentheses are generated by the wah-wah.

Bass

Drums

VERSE

B♭ Dorian

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

(w/wah-wah)

Bass

Drums

Vamp

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

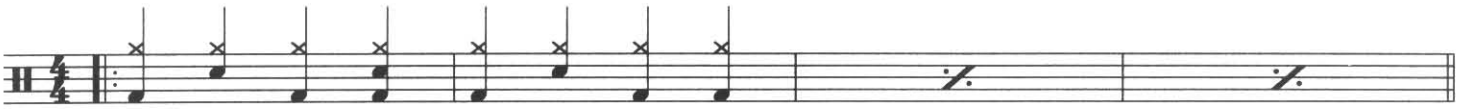
JOHN "JAB'O" STARKS •drums•

CD 2 41 TRACK

Playing slow funk jams like "The Payback" involves an element of risk. As the tempo slows down, the time and space on either side of the beat widen, making it easier to fall off the groove. The band (now called Fred Wesley and the J.B.'s) had no problem with this phenomenon on "Papa Don't Take No Mess." In fact, the time was so immovable in "Papa" that "Jab'o" felt the need to nudge the tempo every so often to liven things up. "The Payback" presented him with the antithesis of that situation. This time around, the pushing and pulling is coming from the rest of the band, which is a little more unsettled than usual. He solves this problem by laying down a relentless, Rock of Gibraltar beat that becomes the unifying force of the groove. Any time someone rushes or lags, "Jab'o's" unshakable feel acts as a magnet that pulls the stray part back into line.

The drum pattern itself, upon first listening, appears to be a fairly straight-ahead, simple backbeat groove. But of course, you know you're not going to get off that easy. The underlying complexity of what "Jab'o" is actually playing is masked by a particularly hot mix on John Morgan's shaker part. "Jab'o's" hi-hat and ghosted snares may be hard to hear under Morgan's sixteenth-notes but they're in there. Even with thirty percent of his sound buried in the mix, he's still the most commanding presence on the track. ◆

INTRO (♩ = 93) (not recorded in the lesson)



VERSE Vamp

DRUM LESSON

CD 2 42 TRACK

BASIC VERSE GROOVE

ORIGINAL VERSE GROOVE

CHARLES SHERRELL •bass•

CD 2 43 TRACK

Ray Charles's music director Clifford Solomon once welcomed a newly recruited bassist with the following words of advice: "We play music both ways in this band. Ig'nant *and* 'telligent." Charles Sherrell would have fit right in with "Brother Ray" because this is one down and dirty, ig'nant bass line that he's playing on "The Payback." But within the "street" simplicity of the recurring "A♭" to "B♭" eighth-note figure, there is contrapuntal design, a keen awareness of what's happening in the drum pattern, and adherence to one of James Brown's favorite rhythmic concepts.

The recurring two-note motif that Charles plays on beats "one" and "three" is immediately answered in the silence of his second and fourth beats by the accented snare backbeats. This alternating call and response relationship changes into a unison situation at the end of each measure when Charles digs even deeper into "Jab'o's" pattern and mirrors the kick and snare drum with his ghosted sixteenth-note pick-ups. Additionally, by emphasizing beats "one" and "three" throughout the tune, he is right in step with Brown's goal of taking the spotlight away from the backbeats. This is what *'telligent* bass playing is all about. ◆

INTRO (♩ = 93) (not recorded in the lesson)

B♭ Dorian

VERSE

B♭ Dorian

Vamp

JIMMY NOLEN AND HEARLON "CHEESE" MARTIN •guitars•

CD 2 44 TRACK

Seventies black film soundtracks had very specific requirements to meet the minimum specifications of the genre. Typically, these were wah-wah and scratch guitars, repetitive bass patterns, and sociopolitical messages in the vocals. James Brown and his sidemen quickly satisfied these prerequisite conditions in "The Payback," and then promptly left the competition in the dust. The simplistic black and white grooves of "Freddie's Dead" and "Shaft" were no match for the multi-faceted Technicolor of this tune.

Jimmy Nolen and "Cheese" Martin help the band make its case within the very first measure of the intro. Four different instruments, each playing short motifs that interlock with each other, contribute to the longer composite one-bar phrase. Bass and Guitar One play on beat "one," beat "two" is the snare followed by the wah-wah guitar on the upbeat, and as the eighth-notes of the wah-wah guitar decay through beat "three," Guitar One returns on the fourth beat to close out the phrase.

During the verse, Nolen and Martin demonstrate their new approach to modality. With all the previous modal tunes in James Brown's repertoire, the guitars always kept things simple, sticking to triads, seventh chords, and the usual ninth voicings. They always let the horns or keyboards take care of any modal elements. In "The Payback," "Cheese" Martin's scratch part breaks with tradition by laying all over the characteristic sixth scale degree (the "G") of B♭ Dorian.

After shadowing the pitches of the bass line for the first six beats of the two-bar phrase, Jimmy Nolen also incorporates this same sixth degree in his wah-wah part (Guitar Two). The power of the intro's rhythmic complexity is now matched by the strength of the verse's expanded harmonic range. ◆

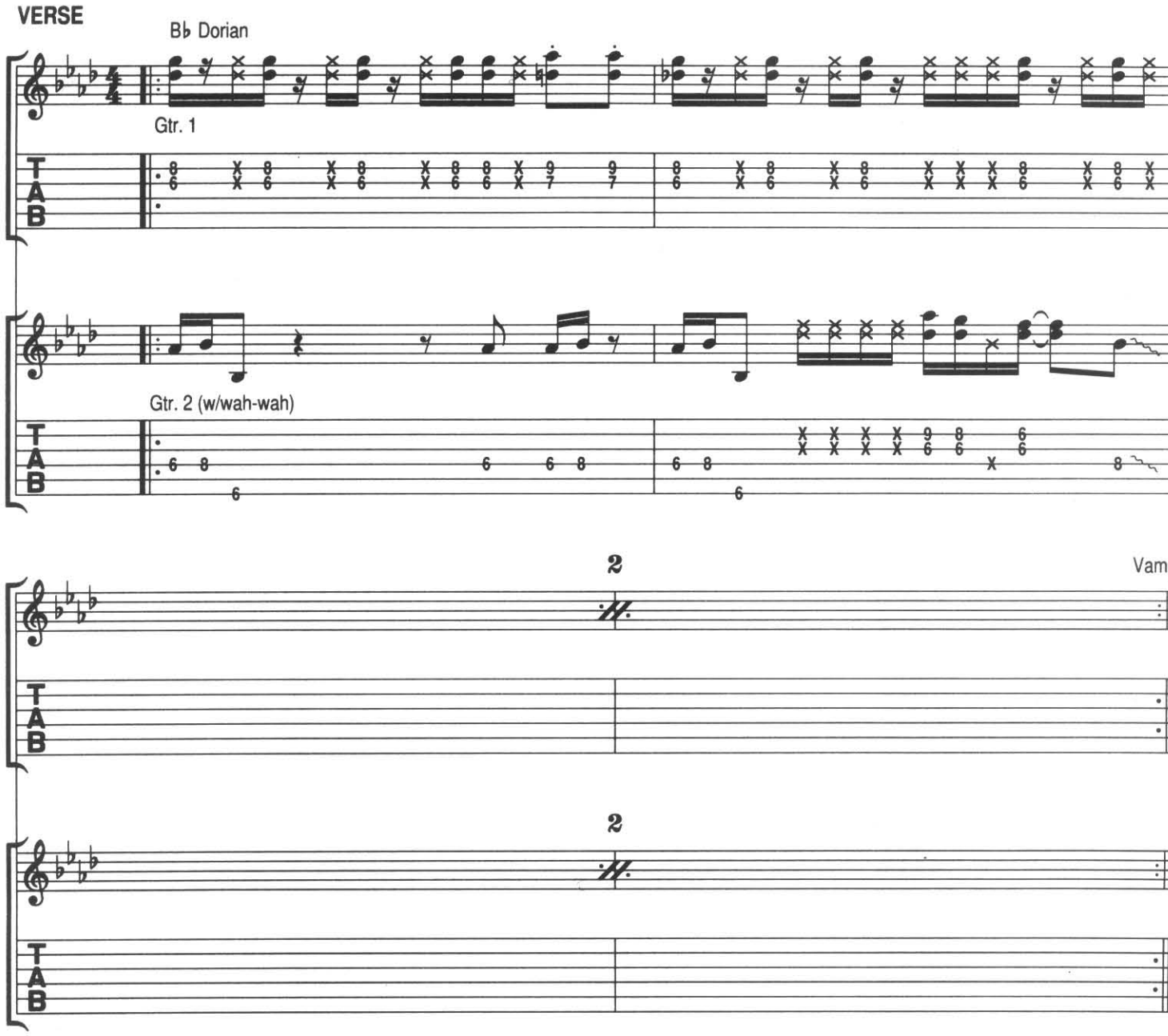
INTRO (♩ = 93)

B♭ Dorian

Palm mute

Gtr. 1 ↑ Don't play this note first time.

Gtr. 2 (w/wah-wah) Notes in parentheses are generated by the wah-wah.


VERSE
B♭ Dorian
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2 (w/wah-wah)
2
Vamp
2

EPILOGUE

Time has been both kind and cruel to James Brown and his sidemen. After temporarily losing his way in the muddled haze of the mid-to-late '70s disco era, James rebounded in the '80s, stepping up his touring schedule and breaking through to younger and broader audiences through cameo film appearances in *Doctor Detroit*, *The Blues Brothers*, and *Rocky IV*. After becoming the rage of the new wave circuit in the early part of the decade, the latter part of the '80s saw him elevated to godlike status by the hip-hop generation. The icing on the cake came in 1986, when he was inducted into the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame. James Brown finally achieved the mainstream recognition that had eluded him for decades.

But there was also a downside that put all of these triumphs into perspective. The man who could quell large-scale race riots with just the sound of his voice was no longer dining with presidents and kings. His much publicized bouts with the law eventually led to his imprisonment, leaving Soul Brother #1 wondering where all his high-powered, fair-weather friends had gone.

Following his release from incarceration, the most resilient man in show business was flying high in the midst of yet another successful comeback when life once again body slammed him back to the canvas: In the winter of 1996, his wife Adrianne died unexpectedly as a result of complications from cosmetic surgery. It's easy to understand why James Brown is feeling very mortal these days, but we all know this temporary condition is no match for the perennial "never give up" style of the Godfather. He's already back out on the road trying to get on the goodfoot in time for the next downbeat.

As would be expected, the tale of his sidemen is a bit less dramatic but it has an equal dose of ups and downs. With the exceptions of Les Buie, Nat Kendrick, and Jimmy Nolen (who died of a heart attack in 1983), all the marquee players from James Brown's definitive rhythm sections are still alive, well, and for the most part, remarkably at peace with how their story played out.

In the decade following the 1973 recording of "The Payback", the only veteran who remained with the Godfather on a consistent basis was Jimmy Nolen, but throughout this period, Clyde Stubblefield, "Country" Kellum, Robert Coleman, Melvin Parker, and even Clayton Fillyau returned for short tours and sporadic recording dates. Brown weathered the better part of the disco era with New York studio musicians, although he did score a few home-grown hits with his own band on "Get Up Offa That Thing" and "Rapp Payback."

As of the writing of this book, only Fred Thomas and Charles Sherrell (who now mostly plays keyboards and conducts) still record and tour with James Brown. Some, like "Catfish" Collins and "Cheese" Martin, are semi-retired, while other band members have been able to maintain musical careers outside of James Brown's kingdom. Clyde Stubblefield currently fronts his own nine-piece band in his new home of Madison, Wisconsin, while his "Funky Drummer" groove continues to work overtime in every city in the world that broadcasts rap.

"Jab'o" Starks left James Brown in 1974 to go on the road with B.B. King but he eventually returned home to Mobile, Alabama to be with his family. Like "Country" Kellum (now living in Rochester, New York) and Bernard Odum (who's back in Augusta, GA playing with a band called Lafayette & Friends), "Jab'o" has become a weekend warrior, keeping his hand in music with local blues and jazz bands while holding down a day job.

Melvin Parker took the same path, teaching school in the Washington D.C. area and playing jazz on the side. Unlike the other part-timers, Melvin still puts in some roadwork when he goes out with brother Maceo's Roots Revisited band. "Bootsy" Collins, the lone survivor of the James Brown funk wars to top the charts under his own name—with the 1978 #1 R&B hit "Bootzilla"—is still out there (in more ways than one), resplendent in his rhinestones, star sunglasses, and platform boots, in his never-ending quest to save the galaxy with his bass.

In the three and a half decades since Bobby Roach, Bernard Odum, and Nat Kendrick walked into Hollywood's United Studios to record "Think", James Brown's guitarists, bassists, and drummers have seen it all. The British Invasion and '60s psychedelia changed the face of music forever. The empires of Motown, Stax, and Philly International rose and fell, while disco almost singlehandedly ruined the recording industry for working musicians. They've seen major racial barriers lifted, only to see equally insidious attitudes rear their ugly heads years later. They've been shot at in Vietnam and they've been shot at at home, and they've been hired, fired, and re-hired dozens of times by the enigmatic genius whose path is so intertwined with their own.

Thirty-six years later, they're still here, proud of their accomplishments and fully cognizant of their impact—not just on music—but on the lives of people across the planet. No, they didn't solve the race question; their USO tour in 'Nam didn't stop the war or save the lives of any GIs; they couldn't even figure a way to get any decent recognition for their life's work. But in a global society sorely in need of joy and spiritual uplift, they have left us with a much funkier world, and for that, they should all have our eternal gratitude.

DISCOGRAPHY

Many of James Brown's original albums are currently available on CD and cassette including *Live At The Apollo* (1963), *Raw Soul* (1967), *Live At The Apollo Vol. 2* (1968), *Sex Machine* (1970), *Revolution of the Mind-Live At The Apollo Vol. 3* (1971), *Hot Pants* (1971), *Get On The Good Foot* (1972), *Hell* (1974), and *The Payback* (1974).

Older JB albums often contain one or two hits with a lot of filler tracks. Anthologies, on the other hand, give you more hits for your dollar as well as offering extended, unedited versions of many of JB's classic tunes. You can go record hunting for out-of-print gems like *The Amazing James Brown* (1961), *Pure Dynamite!—Live At The Royal Theatre* (1964), *I Got The Feelin'* (1968), and *It's A New Day—Let A Man Come In* (1970), but if vinyl originality is not high up on your list of priorities, your best bet is to invest in some of the following CD collections and box sets on the Polydor label:

STAR TIME The career-defining CD box set, 72 tracks on four CD's. 20 of the 23 songs that appear in the *Funkmasters* are contained in this Grammy Award winning package.

20 ALL-TIME GREATEST HITS! A basic James Brown primer on one disc. It encompasses 13 of the songs transcribed in this book.

JB 40: THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY COLLECTION A two CD set containing 40 hits. From "Please Please Please" through 1979's "It's Too Funky In Here."

ROOTS OF A REVOLUTION A two-disc anthology of the early years, 1956–1964.

FOUNDATIONS OF FUNK/PAPA'S GOT A BRAND NEW BAG: 1964–1969 A 27-track, two-disc anthology that marks the development of the band and the evolution of soul into funk. All of the important tracks from "Out of Sight" through "Funky Drummer" are included, often in their extended, unedited forms.

FUNK POWER/1970: A BRAND NEW THANG A 10-track, one-CD collection that focuses exclusively on the year "Bootsy" and brother "Catfish" were in The J.B.'s.

MAKE IT FUNKY/THE BIG PAYBACK 1971–1975 A 26-track, two-disc anthology of the landmark '70s recordings led by Fred Wesley, including "The Payback," "Papa Don't Take No Mess," and the complete unedited version of "Make It Funky."

THE J.B.'S-FUNKY GOOD TIME: THE ANTHOLOGY An anthology of hits and rarities by Brown's '70s band, led by Fred Wesley and featuring Maceo Parker. It includes "Doing It To Death," "Hot Pants Road," "The Grunt," and 27 other tracks.

ALL THE KING'S MEN A CD reissue (on Charly Records) of the original release by the Parker brothers, Jimmy Nolen, Bernard Odum, and the rest of the James Brown sidemen who took part in the 1970 band uprising. Includes "Got To Getcha" and "Funky Women."

Courtesy Showtime Archives (Toronto)

The James Brown Band, 1966. From left: at the organ, band director Nat Jones; the Famous Flames: "Baby" Lloyd Stallworth, Bobby Byrd and Bobby Bennett; behind Byrd, guitarist Jimmy Nolen; guitarist Alfonzo Kellum; percussionist Ron Selico; behind Bennett, on drums: Clyde Stubblefield or "Jab'o" Starks; bassist Bernard Odum: saxophonist St. Clair Pinckney; saxophonist Eldee Williams; saxophonist Alfred "Pee Wee" Ellis, and James Brown.

INDEX

Ain't That A Groove, 10
America Is My Home, 55
Apollo Theater, 16
Average White Band, the, 10
Avons, the, see Gospel Starlighters

Baby Please Don't Go, 8
Baby, You're Right, 19
Ballard, Hank, 8
Bass, Ralph, 8
Benjamin, Benny, 37
Bennett, Bobby, 26
Bewildered, 9, 11, 129
Bland, Bobby "Blue," 36, 131
Bonham, John, 42
Bowman, William "Beau Dollar," 48
Brecker, Michael, 129
Brecker, Randy, 129
Buie, Les, 16, 19, 20, 25, 30,
Burrell, Kenny, 9
Butler, Billy, 36
Byrd, Bobby, 8, 9, 21, 25–26, 78, 95, 104

Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band, 49
Chamberlain, Wilt, 118
Charles, Ray, 137
Chess, Leonard, 8
Chess Records, 8
Clapton, Eric, 133
Clinton, George, 10, 118
Cold Sweat, 10
Coleman, Robert, 121, 127, 129
Collins, Phelps "Catfish," 10, 78, 84, 97, 103, 110, 117, 121
Collins, William "Bootsy," 10, 78, 82, 95, 97, 102, 107–8, 116
Cropper, Steve, 90
cross-stick, 23, 56

Dade Records, 9
Dapps, the, 47
Davis, J.C., 9, 16
Davis, Joseph, 85
Devil's Den, 31
Doing It To Death, 120, 129
Dominoes, the, 8, 9
Doodle Bug, 9
(Do The) Mashed Potatoes, 9
Drummond, Tim, 22, 49, 57
Dyke and the Blazers, 39

Earth, Wind, and Fire, 10
Edwards, Gordon, 129
Ellis, Alfred "Pee Wee," 36, 39, 50, 65
Excello Records, 85

Faddis, Jon, 129
Famous Flames, the, 8, 21, 55
Farrell, Joe, 129
Federal, 8, 30
Fillyau, Clayton, 16, 18
Five Royales, the, 8, 11
Flames, the, 8, 16
Four Tops, the, 37
Francis, David "Panama," 9
Freddie's Dead, 138
Fred Wesley and the J.B.'s, 136
Funky Broadway, 39
Funky Drummer, 10
Funky Women, 10

Garibaldi, David, 94
Gaye, Marvin, 123
Get On The Good Foot, 129
Get Up, Get Into It, Get Involved, 73
Gonder, Alvin "Fats," 8, 16, 20
Gonzales, Gino, 18
Good, Good Lovin', 9
Gordy, Berry, 37
Gore, Edison, 8
Gospel Starlighters, the, 8
Got To Getcha, 10
Griffith, Richard, 85

Hamlin, Lewis, 16
Hayes, Isaac, 134
Hell, 129
Hendrix, Jimi, 133
Hildebrand, Lee, 85
Holiness Church, The, 131
Hooks, 34
House of the Fox Records, 85
Humphrey, Hubert, 36

I Don't Care, 39
I Got A Bag of My Own, 129
I Got The Feelin', 10
I Got You, 10
I Know It's True, 9
Impressions, the, 123
I'll Go Crazy, 9
It's A Man's Man's Man's World, 36
I've Got Money, 19

J.B.'s, The, 78, 97, 112, 118, 129
John, Little Willie, 8
Jones, Nat, 21, 31
Jones, Nate, 58, 60

Kaiser, Henry, 85
Keels, Sylvester, 21
Kellum, Alfonzo "Country," 10, 38, 45, 54, 63, 69, 76, 85, 90, 96, 117
Kendrick, Nat, 9, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18
Kendrick, Nat & The Swans, 9
King Heroin, 129
King, Dr. Martin Luther, 55
King Records, 8, 9, 16, 26, 31, 78, 104, 118
Knox, Nash, 21
Kool & The Gang, 38

Lance, Major, 18
Lathan, Sam, 18
Leeds, Allan, 78
Lewis, Pete "Guitar," 30
Licking Stick, 10
Little Richard, 8, 9
Live At The Apollo, 16, 18–19
Lloyd, Baby, 26
Lost Someone, 19
Love, Power, Peace, 118
Lowe, Sammy, 36

Maceo & All the King's Men, 85, 89, 92, 94
Mack, Clarence, 8
Madison, Jimmy, 129
Martin, Hearlon "Cheese," 110, 118, 121, 127, 133, 138
Matthews, Dave, 129
Maybe The Last Time, 21
Mayfield, Curtis, 134
McCracken, Hugh, 129
Midnighters, Hank Ballard and the, 8
Modern Drummer, 10
Money Won't Change You, 37
Montgomery, Wes, 110
Morgan, John, 136
Motown, 37

Nathan, Syd, 8, 9, 16, 26, 31
New Breed, the, see J.B.'s
Night Train, 19
Nixon, Richard, 129
Nolen, Jimmy, 10, 22, 28, 30, 35, 38, 45, 54, 57, 63, 69, 76, 85, 90, 92, 96, 117, 129, 133, 138

Odum, Bernard, 9–11, 14, 16, 19, 24–25, 38, 44, 53, 85, 89, 95, 112, 139

Pacemakers, the, 78
Parker, Maceo, 10, 22–23, 26, 65, 73, 85, 129
Parker, Melvin, 10, 22–24, 26, 28–29, 33, 78, 85, 88, 94
Pauling, Lowman, 11
Perry, Hubert, 16, 19, 24
Pickett, Wilson, 39
Pinckney, St. Clair, 26, 65, 110, 112
Platters, the, 9
Please, Please, Please, 8, 9
Polydor, 104, 118, 123
Poole, Kenny, 69
Presley, Elvis, 8
Prince, 10
Prisoner of Love, 10
Prysock, Arthur, 78
Public Enemy #1 Pt. 1, 129
Pulliam, Fred, 21
Purdie, Bernard "Pretty," 36

Redd, Gene, 16
Reed, Waymond, 22
Roach, Bobby, 9, 11, 15, 16, 129
Robinson, Kay, 78
Rogers, Lelan, 85
Rollo, Zoot Horn, 49

Sanborn, David, 129
Say It Loud—I'm Black And I'm Proud, 20
Scott, Nafloyd, 8, 21
Scott, Roy, 21
Semens, Antennae Jimmy, 49
Setser, "Fat Eddie," 49
Sex Machine, 10
Sex Machine, 112
Shaft, 134, 138
Sherrell, Charles "Sweets," 58, 62, 68, 75, 116, 137, 139
Skinny Legs and All, 123
Small's Paradise, 118
Smash Records, 31, 34
Smith, Charles, 38
Smith, Jimmy and the Imperials, 38
Solomon, Clifford, 137
Specialty, 30
Starks, John "Jab'o," 10, 36–37, 56, 73, 78, 81, 100, 107, 112, 120, 125, 129, 131, 134, 136
Stormy Monday Blues, 36
Stubblefield, Clyde, 10–11, 22, 39, 42, 52, 67, 73, 112, 114
Superfly, 134
Supremes, the, 37

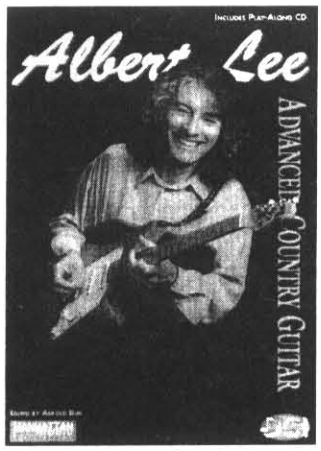
Talkin' Loud And Sayin' Nothing, 20
Tell Me What I Did Wrong, 9
Temptations, the, 37
Terry, Johnny, 9
Tex, Joe, 123
That's The Way Love Is, 36
The Oakland Stroke, 94
Think, 9
Thomas, Fred, 118, 120, 125–26, 132, 139
Thomas, Sam, 24, 28–29
Tower of Power, 94
Try Me, 9
Turn On Your Lovelight, 36

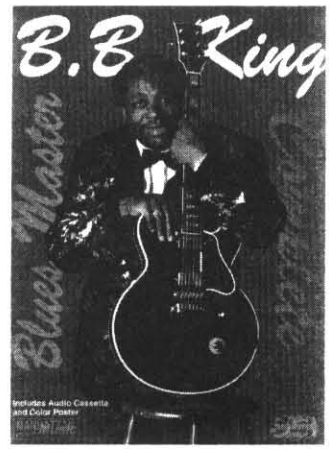
Upsetters, the, 9

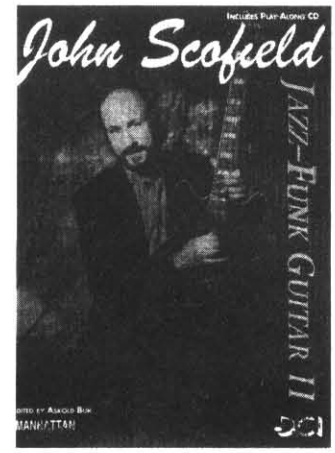
Weinger, Harry, 42, 58
We're A Winner, 123
Wesley, Fred, 65, 110, 118, 129, 134
What's Going On, 123
White, Cliff, 11, 85, 129
Williams, David "Hooks," 34
Williams, L.D., 30, 85
Williams, Obie, 18

MANHATTAN MUSIC PRODUCTS AVAILABLE FROM WARNER BROS. PUBLICATIONS

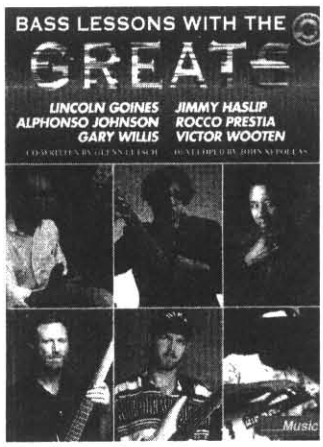
FOR GUITARISTS:

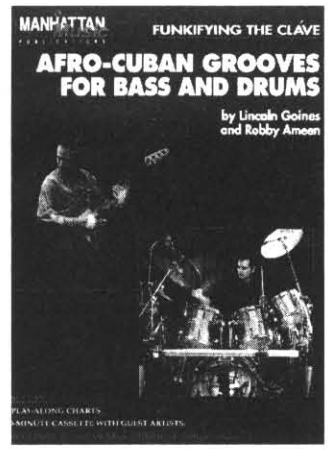


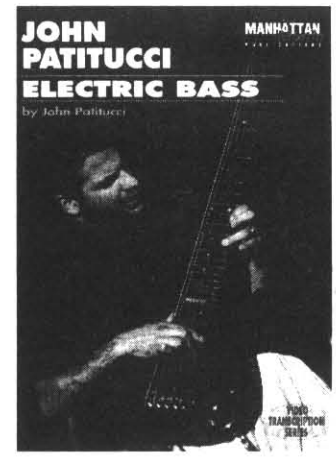


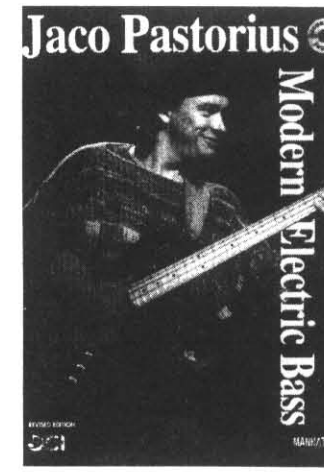


FOR BASSISTS:

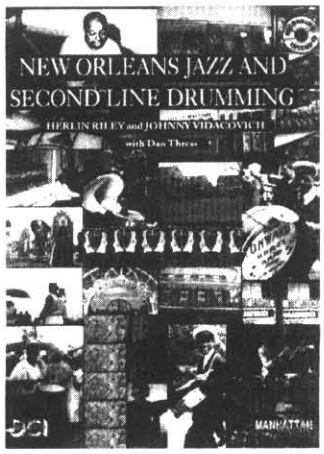


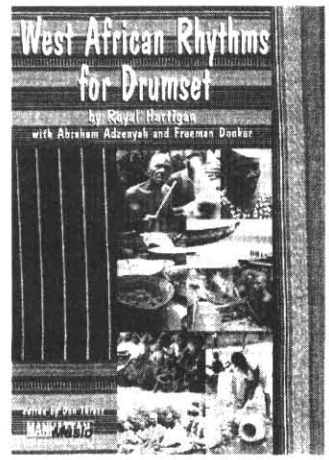


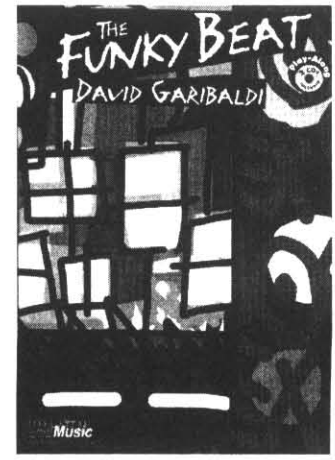


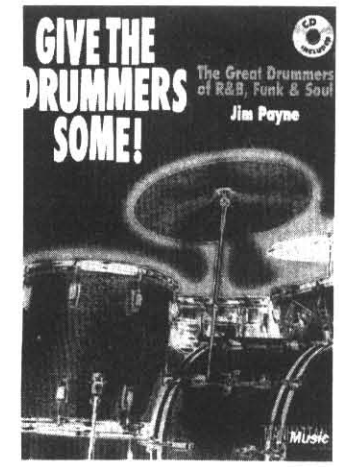


AND DRUMMERS:









For a complete catalog of DCI Music Video, REH Video, and Manhattan Music Publications contact:
Warner Bros. Publications
15800 NW 48th Avenue, Miami, FL 33014
(800) 628-1528 or (305) 620-1500

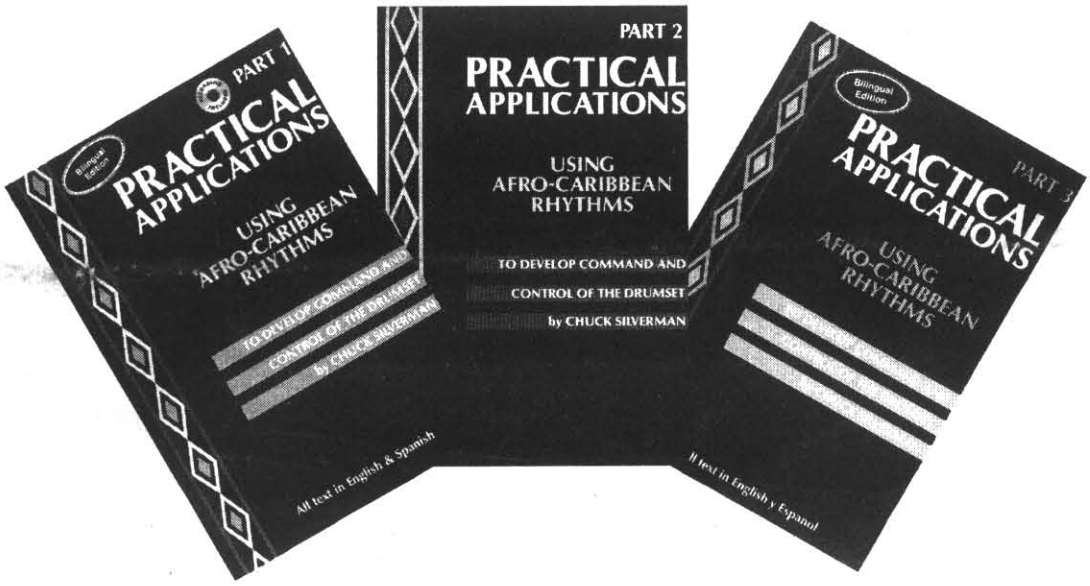
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Allan Slutsky is a Philadelphia-based guitarist, arranger, producer, and writer whose R&B roots were honed in the North and West Philly clubs he played as a teenager in the late '60s. As an author, writing under his own name as well as his Dr. Licks pseudonym, Allan has penned more than twenty music books and has had numerous articles published in *BASS PLAYER, GUITAR PLAYER, KEYBOARD* and other music trade magazines. In 1989, he was the recipient of the *Rolling Stone*-BMI-New York University "Ralph J. Gleason Music Book Award" for his work, *STANDING IN THE SHADOWS OF MOTOWN: The Life And Music Of Legendary Bassist James Jamerson.*

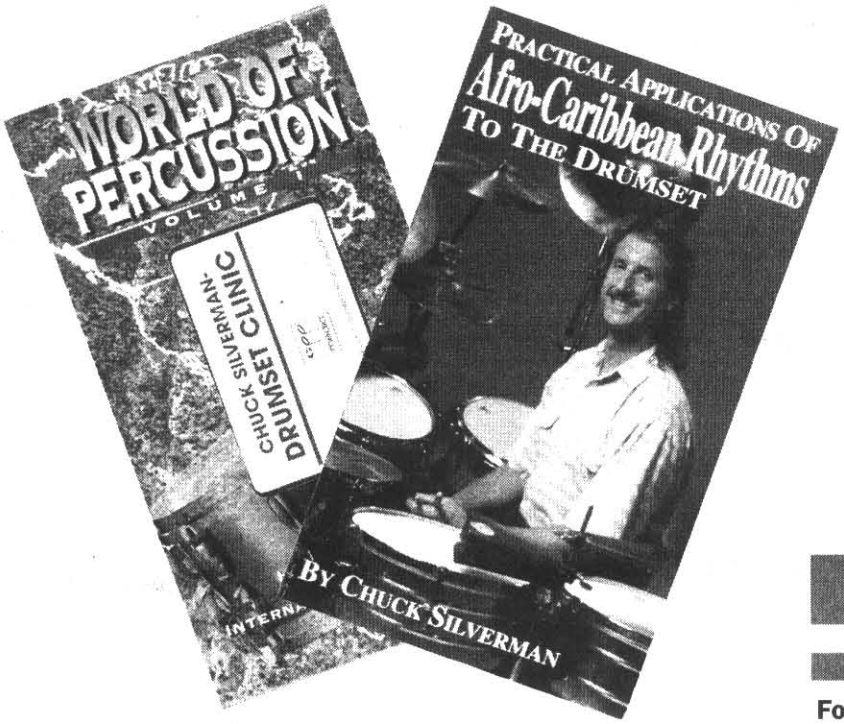
Chuck Silverman is a world renowned musician, music educator, and author. Some of the earliest influences on Chuck's career as a professional drummer were, and continue to be, the great drummers of the James Brown bands. Chuck has appeared at many of the world's finest music schools and conservatories as an artist-in-residence, clinician, and workshop facilitator. Among his other written works (all available from Warner Brothers Publications) are: *Practical Applications* Books 1, 2, and 3, *The Practical Applications Educational Video*, and an educational video recorded live at the 1994 Percussive Arts Society International Convention.

MORE FINE PRODUCTS FROM CHUCK SILVERMAN

BOOKS



VIDEOS



NOTE service music

For a complete catalog call (800) 628-1528 or (305) 620-1500